LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
00003269978

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

TOTE-ROAD AND TRAIL

It's chuck in the day and a bunk in the night

TOTE-ROAD AND TRAIL

Ballads of the Lumberjack

By

DOUGLAS MALLOCH

ILLUSTRATED IN FULL COLOR BY

OLIVER KEMP

INDIANAPOLIS
THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

Copyright 1917
The Bobbs-Merrill Company

PS3525
.A455T7
1917

PRESS OF
BRAUNWORTH & CO.
BOOK MANUFACTURERS
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

OCT 19 1917

©CLA477006

No 1

TO MY WIFE

Had heaven a star, a single star,
  A solitary lamp,
One beacon-light to shine afar
  And lead me back to camp—
That one sure star would bring me to
The camp, the waiting fire, and you.

Had life but one, a single one,
  But you, unchanging still,
However far my feet might run
  Down valley or up hill—
That one true heart, the heart of you,
In good or ill would bring me through.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

It's Chuck in the Day and a Bunk in the Night . . . . . *Frontispiece*

While Us Poor Skates in Regions Cool Go Out an' Make His Money 28

An' Ev'ry Time You Turn a Bend the Next Bend Looks the Best 56

For There Are the Woods to People, and There Is the Trail to Make 88

I'd Like to Just Come Walkin' in an' Find You All A-settin' Here 120

Worked a Peavey, Pulled a Saw, Rode the River in a Thaw 156

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Afterward	164
Aspen, The	131
Bad Man, The	165
Behind a Spire	132
Breakup, The	53
Call Us, America	45
Calling Up the Crew	3
Camp in the Woods with a Friend, A	123
Chaudiere	69
Christella	78
Christina	110
Cruise, The	170
Day, A	90
Discovery	139
Fall, The	15
Forty	134
Fungi	88
Greater the Heart, The	8
Hair of the Dog, The	43
Hero Meddlers, The	67
His Eyes	125
Holy Ground	95
If Fortune Came	119
In Town on New Year's Eve	36
Intercession	97
Interpreters	94
Irish, The	76
Just Alive	49

CONTENTS—*Continued*

	PAGE
Keep Your Ears Ahead	149
Loafer, The	14
Look Back, A	168
Love of a Man, The	12
Man Who Always Won, The	135
Man Who Could Play, The	86
Man's Road, The	107
Night Like This, A	100
Oh, To Be a Gypsy	30
One	122
One-Spot, The	129
Pilgrimage, The	23
Point of View, The	27
Price, The	72
Prosperity	47
Recruit's Request, The	159
Retired	153
Sanctuary	1
Seed	81
Self-Made Man, The	83
Signal, The	75
Simple Life, The	33
Star Spangled Banner Forever, The	31
Stony Brook	61
Superannuated	51
Tenderhearted Bill	58
Three Mornings	112
Times, The	141

CONTENTS—*Continued*

	PAGE
To a Chipmunk	92
Undergrowth	106
Up-River	10
Wedding, The	161
When the Drive Goes Down	56
Widowhood of Doubt, The	151
Widow-Maker, The	40
Winner, The	64
Woodland, The	117
Work in the Woods, The	6
World, The	7
Youth Who Wore an "M," The	18

TOTE-ROAD AND TRAIL

Tote-Road and Trail

SANCTUARY

When some one has slipped you the dirk in the dark,
  When eyes that are loving are lies,
When some one you trusted has made you a mark,
  And somehow the heart in you dies,
There's dirt for you, hurt for you, trouble enough
  To shatter the faith of a man;
But don't ever think there is trouble so tough
  That you can't overcome it—you can.

When living is losing its flavor to you,
  When worry is making you old;
When there is no joy in the thing that you do
  Nor truth in the thing you are told,
There's balm for you, calm for you, out in the wild,
  There's hope for you up on the hill.
Get up in the timber and play like a child;
  You can overcome it—you will.

SANCTUARY

Get up in the timber; the trail and the trees
  Will make you a man in a day.
The smell of the soil and the breath of the breeze
  Will blow all your troubles away.
There's pine for you, wine for you, hope for you
    there—
  The sun and the moon and the star—
If the ways of the city are not on the square,
  Get up in the woods—where they are.

CALLING UP THE CREW

They'll soon be callin' up the crew to cut the Edwards pine;
You feel it in the lungs of you, you fill 'em full of wine;
The night is full of piney smells, the perfume of the North;
An' cold an' clear as icicles the starbeams glitter forth.

They'll soon be callin' us to come; they'll need us in the bush—
The sturdy sons of Scotia some, the old Toronto push,
The Frenchman with his shinin' saw, the sons of Englishmen—
They'll need us up the Ottawa to cut their pine again.

We're getherin' at Wullie's bar, we're settin' in the sun,
We're waitin' for the private car the old Grand Trunk'll run;
We're tellin' how we spent our cash, an' braggin' of our girls,
Whilst from the dirty calabash the blue tobacco curls.

But where is Dodson? In the trench. MacPherson? Dardanelles.
Doret? Home fightin' with the French. The list of missin' swells.
MacCullough? With the Princess Pats. Oates? Somewhere on the foam.
Jones? With a bullet through his slats he's invalided home.

Carruthers? Well, they think he's dead. They lost him in Lorraine;
Perhaps a prisoner instead; he may come back again.
An' James, the blue-eyed Scottish lad? In Flanders, under sod.
Remember Hawkins? Just as bad—torpedoed to his God.

They'll soon be callin' up the crew to cut the Edwards pine,
An' I'll be there my work to do—but not some friends of mine.
They're sleepin' there in Belgium, they can not hear the call
That makes the other fellows come, the pine-woods an' it all.

I'll do my bit with ax an' saw, an', be it pine or spruce,
I'll put 'em down the Ottawa, an' offer no excuse.

CALLING UP THE CREW

I'll be the last man in at night, the first man out at dawn—
I'll do my work, an' do it right, but all the sport is gone.

An' for the lads who died out there, I wish that they could sleep
Up where the flowin' waters wear their channel to the deep.
An' for the lads who suffer hell an' drink the cup of war,
I'll pray a prayer for them as well, who never prayed before.

THE WORK IN THE WOODS

The work in the woods, oh, it's heavy the hurt of it,
The long day of labor, the short night of rest,
The camp, and the tramp, and the damp and the dirt of it,
Afoot when the stars are still out in the west,
The sting of the wind, or the snow and the rain of it,
The cold sky if clear and the wet sky if gray—
And yet there is something, with all of the pain of it,
That finds us and coaxes and calls us away.

The work in the woods!—There is something in spite of it
That pulls at the heart like a sailor the sea,
The gay and the gray and the day and the night of it,
The smile of the sun and the sob of the tree;
Afar from the forest you hear the loud call of it,
Then what do you care if the labor be long?
For, somehow or other, you sort of like all of it—
The work and the play and the sigh and the song!

THE WORLD

The woods world, the man's world, it stretches east
an' west,
A green world, a new world, of all the world the best.
There's work there, an' play there, an' shadow there
an' sun—
There's work there, an' play there, an' sleep when you
are done.

The old world, the whole world, is like the world of
wood,
A big world, a glad world, an' glorious an' good.
There's life there, there's love there, enough for
ev'ry one—
There's work there, an' play there, an' sleep when you
are done.

THE GREATER THE HEART

The man with an ax,
  The lad with a saw,
Learn numerous facts
  Of natural law.
A thing you will see
  As you work at your art:
The older the tree,
  The greater the heart.

There are sorrow and storm
  As the forest grows old;
There are Summers too warm,
  There are Winters too cold.
Gray the Autumn may be
  And the sun may depart—
But the older the tree,
  The greater the heart.

Grow old like the pine
  Through the smiles and the tears,
Growing better, like wine,
  With the passing of years;

THE GREATER THE HEART

Let them say, if they can,
When from life you depart,
"The older the man,
The greater the heart!"

UP-RIVER

Our way to camp we used to drive
  Along about this time of year.
A man felt good to be alive
  When it come time again to steer
Up-river way. We'd top the hill
  An' then the town would drop from sight
An' all the night got calm an' still
  An' all the world got pure an' white.

You know, when you let loose of men
  An' git up there among the trees,
You slip right back to God again
  An' you're a kid on bended knees.
Then things you thought you had forgot
  Come back to you by jump an' leap;
You find yourself, as like as not,
  Repeatin' "Lay me down to sleep."

There ain't no mystery in life,
  There's nothin' you don't understand,
An' oldtime scraps an' oldtime strife
  Look foolish in that silent land.

The careless doubt, the wonder, cease,
  The way is clear that once was dim:
You know there is a Prince of Peace
  An' hunger to git back to him.

THE LOVE OF A MAN

The love of a woman is sweet;
  In life I have fondled a few,
Have felt the red blood as it beat
  The uttermost arteries through.
Yet God in His wisdom divine,
  Yet God in His infinite plan,
Made nothing as holy and fine
  As the love of a man for a man.

There was one with the dark in her hair,
  There was one with the dawn in her eyes,
There was one who had kisses to spare—
  For never a memory dies.
But, maids, you were nothing but maids;
  You passed, as the waters that ran.
For what are the angels or jades
  By the love of a man for a man?

The love of a woman is warm,
  Her kisses as hot as the South,
And glorious battle to storm
  The road to her amorous mouth.

But what is the nectar you drink,
The fragile and beautiful span,
By one indestructible link,
The love of a man for a man?

For when she has thrown you aside,
Has passed from embraces and sight,
And all of the noonday has died
And left but the stars and the night,
You feel on your shoulder a hand,
For comfort you come where you can,
And deep in your heart understand
The love of a man for a man.

He'll go with you over the trail,
The trail that is lonesome and long;
His faith will not falter nor fail,
Nor falter the lilt of his song.
He knows both your soul and your sins,
And does not too carefully scan.
The highway to Heaven begins
With the love of a man for a man.

THE LOAFER

You can aîways tell a loafer, if there's loafin' in the crew;
You can always tell a loafer, for he has so much to do:
When the men are in the maintop he is fussin' with a jib;
On the drive he's always lookin' for a chance away to snib;
In the woods the smallest timber is the timber he will find;
In the yard the twelve-by-twenty is the kind he leaves behind.
He will fuss an' he will fiddle huntin' up the softest snap:
Life is one eternal treadmill for the take-it-easy chap.
Yes, it takes a lot of trouble skippin' labor day by day;
For a fellah has to figger how to dodge it all the way.
On the drive or in the timber, in the mill or in the yard,
You can always tell a loafer, 'cause he works so bloomin' hard.

THE FALL

The nights are colder than they was,
  The days are shorter, too;
    The starry light
    Shines out to-night
  From skies of deeper blue.
The green that lies along the hills
  Is turning brown an' sear—
    Yet I don't need
    No signs to read
  To know the time o' year.

An' I don't need no almanac
  To tell what time it is,
    No Autumn haze
    An' shorter days
  An' all that kind of biz.
Lord! Don't I know the Fall is here
  When loud the nightwind groans?
    Lord! Don't I know
    The season though?—
  I feel it in my bones.

THE FALL

I'm tuggin' at this city leash
  Like forty-seven dawgs;
    I'm wishin' for
    The shanty floor,
  The timber an' the lawgs.
I'm longin' for the wanigan,
  The tote-road an' it all—
    Lord! Can't the jacks
    Who swing the ax
  Remember when it's Fall?

A little more an' it will snow
  Up in the woods again;
    A little more
    The wind'll roar,
  A little more an' then
In Michigan the nights will be
  All sky an' moon an' stars—
    An' then I'll pack
    A little snack
  An' hike to beat the cars.

The woods they call you in the Spring
  When days are warm an' fair,
    When robins sing
    An' blossoms fling
  Their perfume on the air.

THE FALL

They call to you in Summertime
When in the town you sweat,
But in the Fall
Oh, then they call,
They call you louder yet.

Give me the old October woods
When leaves are turnin' brown;
The smell o' pine
Is finer wine
Than any in the town.
Give me the old December snow
That turns the world to white
Up there in Mich.—
Oh, Lord, I wish
That I was there to-night!

THE YOUTH WHO WORE AN "M"

He was the rawest tenderfoot that ever pulled the briar,
A rookey an' an amachure, a dude an' all of that;
But we was short of sawyers, an' the head push had to hire
'Most anything that happened 'round the place to hang its hat.
He was a sort of rah-rah boy, who wore a fancy lid,
With blue an' yellah ribbons in a bow-knot on the brim,
An' pants that looked a size or more too big for such a kid—
If Nature ever made a dub, it certainly was him.

We made it just as pleasant for His Dudelets as we could:
We tossed him in a blanket an' did other little things;
We set a jumper on him, an' the Frenchman soaked him good;
We learnt him penny ante where the deuces beat the kings.
He didn't git discouraged an' he stuck right on the job—

He said he got it harder when they took him in the "frat."
We didn't ketch his meanin', but we knew he was a lob
(That is, until Thanksgivin', but things changed some after that).

It bein' of a holiday, we jumped the bloomin' camp
An' mootched it to the city, there to give our proper thanks;
We took the dude along with us upon that jolly tramp
To be the central figger in some harmless little pranks.
Recollect that little barroom in the hotel on the hill?
It was there the party gethered for the doin's of the day;
An' we started in with vigor our respective hides to fill
With all the burnin' redeye that the gang could put away.

When the stuff was flowin' freely, some one spotted Mr. Dude
An' he dragged him to the region where the merry glasses clink,
An' he ast him, in a manner that perhaps was somewhat rude,
If, upon this glad occasion, he would ruther fight or drink.

His Dudelets kind of trembled when they offered him
"the same"—
His face was really funny, 'twas so solemn-like an'
white—
But he turned to one that called him by a certain ugly
name
An' remarked in language pleasant that he guessed
he'd ruther fight.

It wasn't fair an' proper for us all to take a hand,
But that challenge meant a lickin', if a challenge ever
did.
We proceeded in a body then to make him understand
That a little more politeness was expected of a kid.
But he didn't put his dukes up an' he didn't shed his
coat—
He just sort of hunched his shoulders an' he shouted
"U-rah-rah!"
Then, with both his arms wide open, through the air
I seen him float,
An' he struck me in the stomach while I covered up
my jaw.

In the very farthest corner there we landed in a heap—
"First down!" was all he hollered, "first down, an'
four to gain!"
Then he mixed with Mr. Murphy, an' he put the Mick
to sleep

When ag'inst the bar he slammed him in a way that
give him pain.
"Second down!" he yelled, "an' touchdown!" Then
he straightened up a bit,
When the Swede come swingin' at him with hot an-
ger in his soul,
An' he stuck his toe out forward an' the Svenska's mug
he hit
As he turned to grapple Frenchy, while he yelled,
"Rah, rah! A goal!"

But there come some reinforcements from the man be-
hind the bar—
With a mallet in his flippers Mr. Barkeep joined the
fray;
With a brotherly intention Johnny's cranium to jar
An' no word of explanation, at his skull he blazed
away.
Then I knew 'twas all for Johnny, that the crack would
make him sick,
When the barkeep swung his hammer on our darlin'
angel child.
It took him in the forehead like half a thousan' brick—
But that kid, would you believe it? why, he just
looked up an' smiled!

Then he "kicked a goal from placement," made a
"touchdown" more, or two.
(At least he so announced it ev'ry time he let a yell);
In the corner of the barroom he piled up that fightin'
crew
An', to sort of cap the climax, put the barkeep there
as well.
When he thought they had sufficient then he showed
the boys his "M,"
An' explained the Yost "formations" an' just how
the thing occurred;
To drink a toast to "Michigan" he invited me an'
them—
An', when he ordered soda pop, then no one said a
word.

THE PILGRIMAGE

I've heard of a certain Mohammed who dwelt in a hut
on Arabian sands
And every year of his residence felt that a duty he had
on his hands
To make an excursion his Mecca to seek, a trip to the
home of his race,
A sort of original Home Coming Week, now so com-
mon in every place.

He'd pack up his duffle, his tent and his shrine and
would beat it back home for a spell
To see if the cocoanut harvest was fine and if all of his
cousins were well.
This pilgrimage habit grew rapidly so that it now is the
regular thing
And every season Mohammedans go up to Mecca its
praises to sing.

I always have felt sort of kinship to those who go
journey to Mecca afar,
Though I have no Koran concealed in my clothes, nei-
ther know what Mohammedans are.

But every year I am up and away to a Mecca, a shrine
of my own,
That calls me as loudly and as surely as they who are
called by a city of stone.

My Mecca's the woods, just the woods in the Fall,
when October comes rolling around—
The camp and the river, the pine and it all, when the
frost takes a-hold of the ground.
It isn't religion that gets me to go and it isn't a psalm
or a prayer—
It's twenty-eight dollars, or thirty or so, they are pay-
ing for swampers up there.

It's chuck in the day and a bunk in the night and the
stake when we quit in the Spring
That coaxes me northward to work and to fight—only
these are the why of the thing.
The folks in the East go to Mecca to lay in a new stock
of faith for the year,
But I, I go up to my Mecca for pay—when I'm busted,
to get in the clear.

I guess that's the way of the East and the West, it's
the way of the new and the old,
That they are content on religion to rest, while we
Yankees are out for the gold.

THE PILGRIMAGE

You couldn't get Yankees to go on a hike up to any
Mohammedan shrine,
But offer them thirty a month and they'll strike for the
land of the hemlock and pine.

They say that we worship the dollar too much, we are
crazy for riches, they say;
They say we are worse than the Scotch or the Dutch,
that it's quite the American way.
If pulling the briar or pounding the plugs for a dollar
a day is a crime,
What's asking three hundred for dirty old rugs that
were made in your grandfather's time?

If this is a showdown of Meccas, my friends, of the
Yank or Arabian kind,
We look at the matter from different ends and we each
have a different mind.
The man who looked down on us both from a shelf he
would say, when he saw how we did,
There's good in a man who will bury himself in the
woods for the sake of his kid.

The fellow who diets on cocoanut milk and who spends
all his moments in prayer
Thinks *he* has a soul that is finer than silk, that is ready
its winglets to wear.

But what of the man in a mackinaw shirt, one who thinks of the girl that he wed,
Who's willing to swamp and to dig in the dirt that the wife and the kids may be fed?

I'm thinking my Mecca is moral as his, though it's lit by no altars ablaze;
I guess my religion is work, all it is, yet I think it deserving of praise.
Perhaps the good Lord, when before Him I go, He will hand me a crown and will say,
"This man had to make him a living below and I guess was too busy to pray."

THE POINT OF VIEW

The man who owns these metes an' bounds an' timbered quarter sections,
Whose hayroads link our campin' grounds in nearly all directions,
Awoke one mornin' in the town to find a blizzard blowin',
An' shivered in his dressin' gown to see that it was snowin'.

Then what did Mr. Main Guy do? He packed his fancy duffle,
His spiketail coat an' skypiece new an' shirt with pleat an' ruffle,
An' hopped aboard his special car attached to 'Frisco hummer
An' hiked for Californya far, the golden land of Summer.

There, while the snows in Michigan are driftin' high as houses
An' blizzards hide the Winter sun while Boreas carouses,

He'll play his game of pasture pool upon a meadow sunny,
While us poor skates in regions cool go out an' make his money.

Each pleasant mornin' he'll git up as soon as he is able
An' find beside his coffee cup fresh grapefruit on the table,
While we will eat at four A. M. beneath a lantern's flicker,
An' masticate our graham gem some earlier an' quicker.

An' yet we do not envy you with ev'ry little flurry,
An' if we git a freeze or two, or blizzard, we should worry.
We don't mind Wintertime a bit—there's somethin' good about it,
An' fellahs who are used to it can't git along without it.

Your Californya may be fine with Summer altogether,
But I'll take Michigan for mine, in spite of stormy weather.
There may some pleasure be, perhaps, in little golf balls chasin',
An' yet our under zero snaps are twenty times as bracin'.

While us poor skates in regions cool go out an' make his money

An' I will gamble, in the Spring, when Winter passes over,
An' little birds begin to sing amid the buddin' clover,
We'll come a-gallivantin' down like some Kentucky stepper,
Prepared to lick up half the town, we'll feel so full of pepper.

A man requires some kind of change in ev'ry sort of diet,
His appetite to rearrange an' make his pulses riot,
An' I would rather be a poor up-river grade of bummer
Than ev'ry week an' month endure your blamed, eternal Summer.

OH, TO BE A GYPSY

Oh, to be a gypsy, and drive a gypsy van
Uphill and downhill, and be a gypsy man!
Willow for your whipstock, clover in your hat,
Nothing in your pocketbook at all—but what of
that!

Tin pans that rattle, tin pails that swing—
Uphill and downhill merrily they sing;
Jingle and jangle, clashing out a tune,
Making gypsy melody for a gypsy June!

Uphill and downhill, a blossom in your mouth,
Northward in Summertime, Winter in the South.
Just a van to ward you from the heat or cold,
No house to shelter you, no house to hold!

Money is a burden, dollars are a care,
But a gypsy wanders, wanders anywhere;
Uphill and downhill, gypsy, let us roam,
Ev'ry night a campfire, ev'ry night a home!

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER FOREVER

If it's men for your ships, if it's men for your shore,
  If it's men for your guns on the borders,
If it's guards for your firesides, or fighters for war,
  We are ready and waiting your orders.
We will lay down the ax, we will hang up the saw,
  We will come from the rafts on the river;
And we'll fight for the land and we'll fight for the law
  And the Star Spangled Banner forever!

If it's men for the sea we have river-rats here
  Who are kings of the drive and the water;
If it's men for the line we have swampers to cheer
  All the louder when matters get hotter.
If it's over the sea you would have us to go,
  There to conquer the foe our endeavor,
We are ready—and only one ditty we know:
  That's the Star Spangled Banner forever!

We have handled a saw, we can handle a gun;
  We have made us a trail through the timber,
And we'll swamp you a road to a place in the sun,
  For our arms and our axes are limber.

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER FOREVER

The man in the town is a fancier guy,
  The man in the town may be clever;
But we're ready to fight and we're ready to die
  For the Star Spangled Banner forever!

THE SIMPLE LIFE

You skirt in a hammock, you dame in a swing, you dude in the stern of a yacht,
You think you are hep to this picnickin' thing, an' close up to Nature you've got.
You load up a basket with sissified grub, with sandwiches, olives an' jell,
An' travel ten miles on a trolley or tub an' say you will rough it a spell.
You carry a napkin to wipe off your chin, a tablecloth folded an' neat,
An' china an' silverware always put in—for otherwise how could you eat?
You set on the grass an' lay chicken away in under a maple or pine
An' rave of "the forest primeval" an' say the life that is simple is fine.

The life that is simple? You gimme a pain. You think you've a hero behaved
If venturin' half of a mile from the train or off of a street that is paved.

THE SIMPLE LIFE

The life that is simple?—With chicken for lunch to
eat off a genuine plate?
You're the funniest, phoniest, buckwheater bunch that
ever broke loose in the state.
I tell you, my friends in the lawn tennis suits an' cute
little red ribbon lids,
To us in the woods in our snowpacks or boots you're
nothin' but sissies an' kids.
The life that is simple? If really you'd like to be a
real simple life cuss,
Along up the river to camp take a hike an' put in a
Winter with us.

We'll feed you outdoors all you want to be fed, an'
life will be simple enough;
We won't give you butter to put on your bread, but
stoke you with heartier stuff—
Pork ribs by the yard that are swimmin' in fat an'
other choice cuts of the meat,
Sow belly an' other such dishes as that, rump roast
now an' then for a treat.
Our beans you will like, if a noodle you've got, be-
cause that's the easiest way—
It's better to like 'em, because, like or not, you'll git
'em four feedin's a day.

An' dainties we'll give you, of that never fear, along with our hunyacks an' coons;
Your palate we'll please an' your appetite cheer with plenty of pickles an' prunes.

We won't have no tables or pillows or stools, or waiters to pass things around;
Tin plates an' tin cups an' steel forks are the tools, the grub it is set on the ground.
The only request we'll be makin' of you when our table de hoty you try
Is that you won't grab the best chunks in the stew or carelessly step in the pie.
You'll have to look out for yourself like the rest, there's no one to pour or to carve.
Perhaps you can't eat any chuck but the best? Of course, if you can't, you can starve.
But, if you partake like the rest of the bunch an' shovel some food in your phiz,
I guess you'll go back to the town with a hunch you know what the simple life *is*.

IN TOWN ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

I've hit her up a few myself when Winter days was done;
With twenty million on the shelf a-waitin' for the sun,
I've brung my Winter stake to town an' moseyed to be first
Of all the lumberjacks to drown an 18-karat thirst;
But I renig, an' I give up, an' I lay down an' quit:
I thought that I could quaff the cup an' hit it up a bit;
But of my thirst I ain't so proud, an' I just set an' grieve—
For I ain't in it with your crowd in town on New Year's Eve.

Last year we broke a donkey gear when things was goin' fine.
The boss he says to me, "Come here. You take the Number Nine
An' git to town, an' git repairs, an' back here New Year's Day
Or (sometimes Mister Murphy swears) or there'll be hell to pay.

An' somethin' else, me fine gossoon, to you I would confide:
If you should see a beer saloon, just tie your thirst outside."
An' so I rode the Russels down right prompt you may believe—
That's how I come to be in town last year on New Year's Eve.

An' there a friend met up with me (they're always on the spot,
Around where you're supposed to be to lead you where you're not).
He asked me just to have a beer. I said, "Nay, nay, Pauline;
I have a solemn duty here to nursemaid this machine."
"Well, anyhow," he says, says he, "it wouldn't be a sin
For you to come along an' see us see the New Year in."
I knew the time was hours away when Number Nine would leave—
That's how I come in Smith's Café last year on New Year's Eve.

Believe me, Smith's is quite a place, with glitter, glass an' gilt,
With window curtains made of lace, an' fit for Vanderbilt.

But, fellahs, once inside of there, it wasn't lights an' gold
That handed me the punch for fair an' knocked me stiff an' cold—
It was another sort of sight that met my backwoods eyes,
It was another thing that night that floored me with su'prise;
For, while the booze was slippin' down, the thirsty to relieve,
There set the ladies of the town that night on New Year's Eve.

But some of them they didn't set as much as you suppose;
For, when her throttle she had wet, at times a dame arose
An' led the singin' of a song or startin' of a shout
To help the merriment along an' see the Old Year out.
No, these was really ladies, boys, the ladies of the town;
The wives an' sisters liked the noise an' cries of "Drink 'er down."
An' one who loudest seemed to be, you hardly will believe,
Had left at home a babe of three, to riot New Year's Eve.

IN TOWN ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

I don't lay claim to be a saint—in fact, I'm purty
rough;
An' I ain't never heard complaint that I don't drink
enough.
But I've opinions just the same, old-fashioned though
they sound;
An' when you try the drinkin' game, an' riotin' around,
To me a table an' a bar is much alike, I think,
An', it don't matter where you are, a cocktail is a
drink.
So, on occasions such as these, my wife at home I'll
leave—
I'll do the boozin', if you please, that's done on New
Year's Eve.

THE WIDOW-MAKER

A loose limb hangs upon a pine three log-lengths from the ground,
A norway tumbles with a whine and shakes the woods around.
The loose limb plunges from its place and zigzags down below;
And Jack is lying on his face—there's red upon the snow.

They'll dress him in a cotton shirt, they'll cross his horny hands;
They'll dig a hollow in the dirt within the forest lands;
They'll put him in a wooden box; they'll wonder whence he came,
And build a monument of rocks without a date or name.

"He got a letter, *that* I know." "I wonder where it is."
"I heard him speak not long ago about a wife of his."
"Employment agent shipped him up—he didn't have a cent."
"He was a most peculiar pup." "He *was* a gloomy gent."

And so they'll talk around the fire a little longer yet;
But even idle tongues will tire, and even men forget.
A season passes, and a year. "Why, yes, now thinkin' back,
A widow-maker hit him *here*. We used to call him Jack."

And far away, 'mid city streets Jack staggers down no more,
A heart, a woman's, madly beats, each knock upon the door.
She's back with mother in the flat. She thought she wouldn't care.
Why *does* she always jump like that, each step upon the stair?

"For anger burns so quick a flame the year that you are wed.
I said some things just as they came I never should have said.
It takes a little time, I guess, the married life to live—
To want your way a little less, to suffer and forgive."

They'll dress him in a cotton shirt, they'll cross his horny hands;
They'll dig a hollow in the dirt within the forest lands;

They'll put him in a wooden box; they'll wonder
whence he came,
And build a monument of rocks without a date or
name.

THE HAIR OF THE DOG

There was a lumberjack who tried
To break away from booze,
An' ev'ry Winter nearly died,
An' yet the fight'd lose;
All Winter he would go without
An' never take a thing;
An' then would kill himself, about,
With whisky in the Spring.

Last Winter up to camp he come
An', as he always would,
Announced that he was through with rum,
An' through with it for good.
He sprung a gold-cure of his own:
To show that he was strong,
That he could leave the stuff alone,
He brought a quart along.

He put that whisky in his bunk;
He slept with it at night;
But not a drink he ever drunk,
An' no one saw him tight.

THE HAIR OF THE DOG

Each day he said, "All yesterday
I didn't taste the stuff.
I guess, old booze," he used to say,
"You'll see it ain't a bluff."

A week, a month, the Winter passed,
But still it was the same—
For he had won the fight at last
An' proved that he was game.
An', when he come to town again,
He'd lean against the bar
An' tell the other drinkin' men
What omadhauns they are.

No doubt there are a bunch of things
That worry us a lot;
But maybe we could pull their stings
If close to them we got,
If we that way of his'd try—
Just bunked with them a bit,
Just looked them squarely in the eye,
An' showed a little grit.

CALL US, AMERICA!

Call us, America,
If you want men!
Sound the loud clarion
Over the camp;
We shall come merrily
Marching again
Out of the wilderness,
Out of the damp.
To the blue firmament
Fling the blue flag,
Banner of liberty,
Red, white and blue,
High on the mountain-top's
Uttermost crag—
Call us, America,
Call up the crew!

Call us, America,
Out of the wood,
Out of the timberland,
If it be war;
Call up the lumberjacks,
They who have stood

CALL US, AMERICA

On your red battle-line
  Fighting before.
When they have challenged you
  We have replied,
Men from the lumber camp
  Answered them then—
Guarding the Government,
  Guarding the tide,
Call us, America,
  If you want men!

PROSPERITY

It's easy to haul on the level,
  A tote-road that's smooth as a floor;
You may have to work like the devil
  An' pull till your shoulder is sore;
An' even a hill may not best you,
  A little upgrade now an' then—
But there is one road that will test you,
  The test of both horses an' men.

An' that is the downgrade, my brother,
  The place where you don't have to pull;
The easy road, somehow or other,
  Is one that of trouble is full.
The road up the hill you can master,
  The long haul that's level may beat,
But when things are pushin' you faster—
  That's when you must keep on your feet.

Hard luck seldom conquers a fellah,
  A man of the regular kind;
But when you will quit, if you're yellah,
  Is when things are shovin' behind.

Right then is the danger of ditchin',
  Right then you are wantin' to run—
So brace yourself back in the britchin'
  An' keep in the middle, my son.

JUST ALIVE

A lawg-chain broke, an' a hemlock load
Come pourin' down on the open road.
  It caught Red Jones where he stood at,
It caught Red Jones before he knowed
  An' it knocked him down an' it rolled him flat.

We pried 'em loose an' we pulled Red out.
He was bunged up right, an' there ain't no doubt.
  He had broke one arm, he had broke one laig,
He had tore his ear, he had broke his snout,
  An' his ribs was stove like a soft-boiled aig.

We loaded Red on a lawggin' sleigh
An' we drove all night an' we drove all day
  Over corduroy, over rut an' rock,
Till we fetched at last to old Cloquet
  An' landed Red with the sawmill doc.

When the doc got through of a-mendin' Red,
An' had him put snug in a trundle bed,
  An' he said that Red maybe might survive,
Then what do you think that darn fool said?
  "Well, I'm mighty glad to be just alive!"

Then I went downstairs an' I says, says I,
(To myself, of course), "You're a lucky guy!
  You ain't broke no laig an' ain't broke no rib,
An' you needn't lay while the days go by
  An' eat from a spoon with a baby's bib."

An' it done me good just to swing my stem,
An' my arms—well, I tried out both of them;
  An' I wiggled all of my fingers five,
An' I quoted Red's little vocal gem,
  "Well, I'm mighty glad to be just alive!"

SUPERANNUATED

We're breakin' camp on Sunday, we're goin' back to
town,
We'll hit the trail on Monday, the last big stick is down.
I heard it roar an' rumble, I watched the giant fall;
I saw the pine-tree tumble, the last old boy of all.

Old pine, the truth I'm learnin': I, too, have had my
day;
I, too, no more returnin' will come along the way.
For Time's keen ax has hit me an' sent me to the
dump;
For Time has come to git me, an' life is but a stump.

There may come other seasons an' other fightin' men,
But I, for Time's good reasons, will not come back
again.
I am a dead pine standin' upon a treeless hill;
Death waits beside the landin' to claim me as he will.

For forty years I've tramped it by tote-road an' by
trail;
For forty years I've camped it in rain an' snow an'
hail;

But now my arm no longer will clear away the pine,
An' younger men an' stronger will do this work of
mine.

An' yet I will not sorrow, though age is in my veins,
Though but a short to-morrow to such as me remains.
For, when the strand shall sever, some friend will
come an' say:
"Now give him rest forever—for, God, he worked his
way!"

THE BREAKUP

Now the breakup is here, for the Springtime is near,
an' the Winter has mootched on its way.
We have busted our camp an' are off on a tramp to the
palaces down on the Bay—
Twenty miles by the trail an' a hunderd by rail in the
dawghouse along with the con,
Till we meet up again with them pleasant young men,
with the lads with the diamonds on.

Yep, the Springtime is nigh, an' we're sayin' good-by
to the norway an' pine for a spell:
We have cussed out the boss, fed our favorite hoss, an'
have kicked the young bullcook farewell.
We have squared with the van for the bills that we ran
for our Peerless an' mittens an' socks,
An' we're off for the town with our walks written down
for the barkeep to change into rocks.

Twenty miles by the trail an' a hunderd by rail in the
dawghouse along with the con,
Till we meet up again with them pleasant young men
with the aprons an' diamonds on.

THE BREAKUP

We've a seven months' thirst to be shortly immersed,
for we're rollin' in easy-got wealth;
An' the sissified jay who may git in our way he had
better look out for his health.

For we're lousey with cash an' we're weary of hash an'
we long for a sight of the suds.
We've a campstake to blow with the parties below for
their licker an' dinners an' duds.
We've a campstake to spend at the long Winter's end,
an' they're waitin' to see us come down:
They are crackin' up ice an' are raisin' the price of
ev'ry old thing in the town.

But what do we care? We have lucre to spare, an'
there's nothin' too good for us now.
If the limit is ten we will tilt it again, for we're ripe
for a game or a row.
There'll be singin' o' nights an' some beautiful fights
an' a general raisin' of Ned,
An' that little old spot, if it wants it or not, will be
painted a delicate red.

When the campstake is gone an' we see the gray dawn,
when the fiddles are playin' no more,
When the pleasure is past an' we're busted at last, with
a head an' a heart that are sore,

With no sighin' or sobs we will hustle for jobs an' will
thank the good Lord we're alive—
For there's work an' there's fun an' white water to
run, up the river along with the drive!

WHEN THE DRIVE GOES DOWN

There's folks that like the good dry land, an' folks
that like the sea,
But rock an' river, shoal an' sand, are good enough
for me.
There's folks that like the ocean crest, an' folks that
like the town—
But when I really feel the best is when the drive goes
down.
So pole away, you river rats,
From landin' down to lake—
There's miles of pine to keep in line,
A hunderd jams to break!

There's folks that like to promenade along the boule-
vard,
But here's a spot I wouldn't trade for all their pave-
ment hard;
Ten thousand lawgs by currents birled an' waters
white that hiss—
Oh, where's the sidewalk in the world that's half as
fine as this?
So leap away, you river rats,
From landin' down to sluice;
There's lawgs to run, there's peavey fun
To break the timber loose!

An' ev'ry time you turn a bend the next bend looks the best

An' ev'ry rollin' of a stick that starts her down the stream
An' ev'ry bit of water quick where runnin' ripples gleam
Means gittin' nearer to the end, to wife an' babe an' rest—
An' ev'ry time you turn a bend the next bend looks the best.
Then peg away, you river rats,
From sluiceway down to mill—
Each rock you clear will bring you near
The house upon the hill!

There's folks that like the good dry land, an' folks that like the sea,
But rock an' river, shoal an' sand, are good enough for me.
There's folks that like the ocean crest, an' folks that like the town—
But when I really feel the best is when the drive goes down!

TENDERHEARTED BILL

The lumberjack he ain't no saint,
That much I will agree;
There are occasions when he ain't
Just what he ought to be.
At sayin' prayers he's kind of slack,
An' kind of fond of drink;
An' yet these fellahs ain't as black
As some folks seem to think.

Now there was Billy Anderson,
A jack from Puget Sound,
A fellah who could lift a ton
Like some men lift a pound.
An' yet he had the kindest heart,
As big as kingdom come—
You'd always see him take the part
Of creatures that was dumb.

Bill never any horse would whip,
No matter how he balked,
An' on an extry longish trip
Big Bill got out an' walked.

TENDERHEARTED BILL

Bill never yet was known to kick
The meanest yellow cur;
An', when that spotted calf was sick,
How Bill took care of her!

Why, I remember once we had
A cat around the camp;
She wandered in so thin an' sad,
A reg'lar little tramp.
Bill fed her meat an' fed her milk
An' give her half his chuck,
Until her coat was fine as silk—
She surely was in luck.

Bill Anderson he wouldn't hurt
(So tenderhearted he)
The mole that burrowed in the dirt
Or bird upon the tree.
There's nothin' riled Bill Anderson
As for some big galoot
To start to plaguin', just for fun,
Some helpless little brute.

One night the clerk he tied a can
Upon the kitten's tail
An' turned her loose outdoors—an', man,
You ought to seen her sail!

Then Bill, the tenderheartedest
  Of men, just give a gulp
An' jumped upon that joker's chest
  An' beat him to a pulp.

STONY BROOK

Oh, the Stony Brook is foamin' where the boulders
show their teeth,
Just a-waitin' for a chance to start a jam;
There is water white a-combin' on the granite under-
neath,
There's a lovely chance for trouble at the dam.
They will sluice her just at daylight an' they'll let a
million through,
They will ram her full of timber to the brim,
They will sluice her in the gray light, an' there'll be
some work to do
For Johnny Long an' them along with him.

Yes, I think it more'n likely that there will,
But there's half a hunderd peavies on the hill,
And there's half a hunderd rats
That are handier'n cats
Just a-longin' for the pond above to spill.

They have mootched it down from Percy's, they have
hiked it from the rear,
They have gethered in from ev'ry blasted camp,
An' they're ready for the mercies of a brook like this'n
here,
An' they ain't afraid of bubbles an' of damp.

So it's jam, you norway devils, an' it's jam, you crazy pine—
We will show you how a man can be a mink;
We will join you in your revels an' we'll whip you into line
Or we'll leave our bones to whiten in the drink.

We may leave our bones below to wash away,
We may give the rocks a choicer bit for play,
We may die along with you,
But we'll drive you, drive you through,
An' we'll land you safe an' solid at Cloquet.

Now a jill-poke in the alders is a mighty measly thing—
It can tie a lot of timber in a knot;
But a pair of granite boulders can a hunderd thousand wing
Till there's nothin' that'll budge it but a shot.
But, before you try the powder or to break her with the juice,
Hand some peavies to the river rats an' jacks,
We will roll her an' we'll crowd her an' we'll break the timber loose,
We will break her, or a half a hunderd backs.

We may break a half a hunderd men in two,
But we'll git that Injun timber safely through;
  We will pry the Stony Brook
  Wider open than a book—
Yes, there's work for Johnny Long an' us to do!

THE WINNER

He had come up from the ranks. He drove
A yoke of steers in the good old days
When Michigan all was a treasure trove
And men made money in various ways.
He watched his chance and he made his plays
And he worked at night till the stars were dim—
And presently people began to praise,
And even at last to envy him.

Now, that is the mark of a true success:
When you're doing well and the world is glad
You have partly won—but the thing, I guess,
Is to do so well that the world gets mad.
When the people talk of the luck you had
And begin to wink and to shake the head
And to hint of ways that were dark and bad,
Then you've won success—so he often said.

But he, 'way down in his heart, he knew
What success had cost, how success had come:
It came on the long trail to the Soo,
It came in the timber of the Thumb,

THE WINNER

It came on nights when his legs were numb
With the wear of labor and hurt of cold,
When he asked the future, and found it dumb,
Where the highway lay to the land of gold.

But he worked and figured and fought and planned,
He watched his chance as a fighter must,
And he hammered fate with a good right hand
In the Winter snow, in the Summer dust;
And others might falter and others rust
But his will shone on like a shining sword,
With an endless hope and a tireless thrust,
As a yeoman fought for his ancient lord.

It put the wrinkles upon his brow,
It put the gray in his yellow hair,
It gave him a brand of his own, somehow,
That none of the envious ever wear.
For labor had written its record there
In his shoulders round and his fingers bent—
On his face had printed the stamp of care—
And something, too, of a great content.

There is something envy can never reach,
There is something envy can never touch
With its keenest word or its cruelest speech,
When a man has labored and suffered much.

THE WINNER

For what are the idle words of such
By the glad approval of one's own soul?
Their words of envy to those who clutch
The thing they sought for, the golden goal?

He is walking down through the final years
(He passes silently on the way),
And the vale behind has been wet with tears
And the hills behind have been glad with day.
And do you think that the things we say,
The sneer of envy, the laugh of spite,
Could bow the head of the man of gray
That has held erect in the hardest fight?

For the thing we win in the war of life
It is not the gold, it is not the fame,
But the inner sense that through all the strife
Unchanged, unfaltering, still we came.
We have won our own, not the world's acclaim,
The thing we wanted to do have done;
And the world may praise or the world may blame—
But our own souls know we have worked, and won.

THE HERO MEDDLERS

So now they are pinnin' of medals on people, I see by the news:
They're huntin' the highways for heroes an' beatin' the byways for clues,
An' ketchin', convictin' an' markin', while Andy more martyrs pursues.

That's all very pleasant an' proper, but leads me to wonderin' what
They figger down east is a hero, they figger is brave an' is not;
I bet, while they're huntin' for heroes, a few of our own we have got—

A few of our own on the river, that never no medals will wear
Because all the things they are doin' they always are doin' out there,
With no one to 'specially notice an' no one to 'specially care.

THE HERO MEDDLERS

It's courage to fight the quickwater a moment some
mortal to save,
It's courage the rapids to rassle an' rescue some fool
from the grave;
But to do it for bread an' for butter all day ain't con-
sidered so brave.

I reckon we won't git no medals up here for the
chances we take;
It's just for the wife an' the babies, the rent an' a gro-
cery stake
We come at the call of the river, the jam an' the roll-
way to break.

We won't git no thousand a-livin', we won't wear no
ornaments dead;
There ain't none of us that are heroes—we're rats of
the river instead;
An' we ain't runnin' rapids for glory—we're just fight-
in' trouble for bread.

CHAUDIERE

From a pathway of quiet unstirred by commotion,
From the forests of green to the dwellings of brown,
In quest of the river, in quest of the ocean,
The Ottawa waters come peacefully down
And, here by the town,
Throw aside the dull gown
Of their up-river green
For the shine and the sheen
And the gossamer glory of rapids that run,
For the glitter of jewels that flash in the sun.
Here they leap
From their sleep
And in majesty sweep
Through a gateway of stone, through the cataract's lair,
Where the leonine rocks shake the mist from their hair
And startle the shore
With the roar
Of Chaudiere.

From the hush of the forest where censers are swinging,
Where the lilies unfold and the wild roses bloom,
In quest of the world where the saw-song is singing,
The Ottawa timber comes down to the boom;

And here waits the flume
Frothing white with the spume,
Frothing white with the spray
Of the waters at play.
Now the channel is opened that leads to the slide,
And now safe by the rapids the timber-cribs glide.
Just a flash
And a crash
And a plunge and a splash
In the calm of the stream where the waters run fair—
And all vainly the rocks in their mid-river lair
Shall threaten them more
With the roar
Of Chaudiere.

From the land of the forest, the cabins dim-lighted,
From the camp in the woodland asleep in the sun,
In quest of the world that in dreams they have sighted
The men of the shanties come down for their fun,
Come down ev'ry one
When the wild work is done
As the river at play
Leaps to ripples and spray
When it sniffs the St. Lawrence and glimpses the goal
Where the salt breezes freshen and long billows roll.
To be free
As the sea
Ev'ry man longs to be

CHAUDIERE

'Mid the lights of the town, 'mid the smiles of the fair—
Then what shall the sturdy young shantyman care
Though tremble the shore
With the roar
Of Chaudiere?

But the years hurry by and the years hurry onward,
The ax-stroke is busy on hill and in glen;
As fade the pale stars when the night travels dawnward,
The trees in the sky tumble earthward again.
They shall vanish—and then
Shall the shoutings of men
Diminish and die
Where the waters run high.
O you maid in the town, hold your shantyman dear
For the men of the river shall vanish from here.
They shall sweep
To the deep
Where the centuries sleep
And shall leave but a kiss and a memory fair,
Like the waters that flow to the mystic Out There,
Returning no more
To the shore
Of Chaudiere.

THE PRICE

The drive it ain't such easy graft that I would recommend
To any gink to ride the drink, an', least of all, a friend.
It's up at four an' sluice a dam or sack a swampy rear
Until the sun has got the run an' baby stars appear.
It ain't no job to recommend
To anybody that's a friend.

I've heard some guy from off the plains who'd punched the cows a spell
Describe the same an' cuss an' claim the cowboy life is hell—
When cattle beller in the night an' fifty head go down,
When bulls stampede an' rivers bleed from trampled banks of brown,
While gray coyotes wait to browse
Upon the flanks of wounded cows.

But, Mr. Puncher from the plains, you've never tackled this,
Have tried to put a Winter's cut to town without a miss.

A bughouse bull may scare a herd an' break a hunderd bones,
An' so a lawg can play the dawg an' snub among the stones
An' pile a norway drive so deep
A crew will lose a week of sleep.

My puncher friend has seen a man an' hoss go out to mill
The bloodshot eyes an' sweatin' thighs an' flyin' feet that kill,
Has seen a man an' hoss go down before that sea of meat,
Has seen it pound 'em in the ground beneath a thousand feet—
Has seen the longhorns have their fling
An', where a Man was, leave a Thing.

But I have seen a river-rat, a peavey in his mit,
Below a jam the peavey ram beneath the breast of it;
An' I have heard the timber break, have heard it groan an' whine,
Have heard him cry an' seen him die before a wall of pine—
Have seen the foam a second red
That never yet give up its dead.

An' so, I guess, it always is: the cowboy or the rat
They may be slick, but Death is quick an' cattier than
that.
As long as men must fight for bread, must fight an'
work an' cuss,
Some other guy must go an' die to pay the Price for us.
For men who toil on land or tide
Have Death, the foreman, at their side.

THE SIGNAL

The time that Peary found the Pole
I saw the strangest thing;
My blanket 'round me in a roll,
I camped beside a spring.
'Twas when outdoors you like to lay
These early Summer nights—
An' in the north, so far away,
I saw the Northern Lights.

I saw the blue sky overhead,
An' then, in flashin' bars,
I saw the stripes of white an' red,
An', over them, the stars.
I saw the red an' white an' blue
Up there at Peary's goal—
I saw the Stars an' Stripes, an' knew
That he had found the Pole!

THE IRISH

The sawin' of lumber,
The fallin' of norway,
The old occupation
Of drivin' the pine,
Has brought any number
Of men to our doorway—
Brought every nation
A-crossin' the brine.
But, of every faction,
From swampers to sorters,
Who run on the rivers
Or work in the mill,
The quickest in action
In murmurin' waters,
The cattiest drivers,
Are Irishers still!

Folks talk of Quebeckers
From Saguenay fountains,
They talk of world-beaters
From valleys of spruce,
They talk of the crackers
From Tennessee mountains,
The sow-belly eaters
An' drinkers of juice,

THE IRISH

They talk of the Oles,
The foreigner stranger
Who works when the flood of
The pine is at hand—
But the holy of holies,
The altar of danger,
Is red with the blood of
The emerald land!

The hottest in fightin',
The thirstiest drinkin',
The loudest in prayin'
When prayin' is due,
The slowest in writin',
The quickest in thinkin',
The wittiest sayin'
The thoughts of a crew—
When timber is jammin',
When trouble is makin',
When water is mirish
Or bubbles alive,
The universe damnin',
The lawg-jam a-breakin'—
Oh, there are the Irish,
The kings of the drive!

CHRISTELLA

I say that I am done with them—
  One memory has turned to gall.
I have my little fun with them—
  I have my fun, and that is all.
A woman square? There never was
  A woman who was square to me.
Christella—if there ever was
  A living devil, it was she.

'Twas Winter in the timber yet
  But on the river it was Spring.
And, God, how I remember yet
  The woods, the waters, ev'rything.
A vale like that one yonder there,
  A road that ran across a hill—
We used to come to wander there;
  'Twas Spring, and it was Winter still.

One night she picked a flow'r or two,
  These faded red anemones.
I think we walked an hour or two—
  That was the night she gave me these.

She said the same things o'er and o'er,
The story that will never tire;
And, fool, I worshiped more and more,
And all the sky was red as fire.

They caught them many miles away,
The woman and the man at last;
But something drove the smiles away
From that Christella of the past.
"You do not know!" she cried to me
And looked that look of old again;
I guess she would have lied to me,
If I had let her, even then.

I struck her—God forgive me that;
A woman is a woman still.
But God He will believe me that
I struck when other men would kill.
That night, that minute, to the West
I turned my face forever more;
And not a woman through the West
Has ever passed my cabin door.

My name McKinney? Yes, it was—
And many more have done the same.
How is it that you guess it was
Who know me by another name?

She said it? Hold the candle. So
Another reaps the wage of sin?
Be careful how you handle—Go
And get the doctor! Bring her in!

SEED

My front yard ain't no garden spot—
  It's chips an' cans an' other junk,
A whisky bottle, like as not,
  Smashed on a woodpile by a drunk—
My front yard is a dumpin' ground
For all the broken stuff around.

An' yet the other day I seen
  A crack appear—then peepin' through
There come a little leaf of green,
  An' in the mornin' there was two;
An' now to-day looks up at me
A smilin' young anemone.

I never knew that it was there
  All Winter through awaitin' Spring,
I never thought a place so bare
  Could ever grow so sweet a thing;
Yet all the while the tiny seed
Was waitin' Springtime to be freed.

SEED

Last night a preacher come to camp
An' sung a song an' read the Word,
An', underneath the dirt an' damp
An' moral junk, a blossom stirred,
A thing I could not understand:
I looked—an' Christ held out His hand.

'Twas not the preacher done it all,
'Twas not his sermon or his smile:
A-listenin' for Jesus' call
My soul had waited all the while—
The seed that heard the parson's pray'r
A word my mother planted there.

THE SELF-MADE MAN

The yarn is short. Sit down. I'm glad to tell
The little to be told. Hard work—that's all.
Self-made? I guess that fits me pretty well.
I surely didn't have what you would call
A silver spoon in any mouth of mine
When I was born, for we were poor as mice—
A homestead eighty in a land of pine;
An even hundred was the purchase price.

Lord, how my father slaved—my mother, too.
I was the oldest, and I got a share.
How fast the babies came and troubles grew,
While still in poverty we wallowed there.
Yet father was the easy-going kind,
And scraped along, as happy as could be;
And even mother didn't seem to mind—
But I said soon and certain, "Not for me!"

There was a girl—there nearly always is.
I swore that I would never offer her,
My wife, a home like father offered his,
The dingy shanty of a laborer.

They want good clothes, they want a thousand
things
The ordinary man may never guess;
They want some money—it is money brings
To most of us the most of happiness.

I left the farm and struck out for myself.
I never did get back in all the years.
Work soon put poor old dad upon the shelf,
And mother long ago was through with tears.
I often used to wonder how things went
Back there at home—I bet that they were bad—
But I worked on with just one fixed intent:
To have a little more than father had.

Now, I knew timber—dad had taught me that.
He never had the gumption, though, to get
His hands on any of it. He just sat
Asleep 'mid riches. He just sat and let
No better men grab miles and miles of it,
Good old cork pine, as good as ever grew;
But when the trail to virgin woods I hit
I knew the game, and knew just what to do.

So I got pine—a forty, eighty, then
A quarter section. Every copper cent
That I could save or get from other men
Into some little bunch of timber went.

THE SELF-MADE MAN

I drove a team, I jobbed, I built a mill,
And I knew every trick of every trade.
For thirty years I dug away until
I found a little fortune I had made.

And here I am—not rich as riches go;
You've got to have a million in these days
To call you rich—but, if I had to, though,
Perhaps five hundred thousand I could raise.
Not old—I don't call crowding sixty old;
I'm quick and spry as many younger are;
And there is not a luxury that's sold
I can not buy—my club, my yacht, my car.

The girl? They're all alike, these women are.
That's long ago—I neither care nor hate.
But he was there, and, while I wandered far,
She married him, and wrote she could not wait.
This life at best is just a rotten game.
You sometimes wonder why you must exist.
I worked, I won—but few the joys that came.
I guess that there was something that I missed.

THE MAN WHO COULD PLAY

As reckless an' roarin' a gang of rats
  As ever broke jams or laws
That landed the drive at the Sanford flats
  That Spring of the year it was.
An', when it was snug in the sortin' boom,
  The company paid us off,
We crowded the bar for to booze consume
  Like pigs at a feedin' troff.

I needn't say just where we wound it up,
  That beautiful jamboree;
We'd gargled our thirst with the brimmin' cup,
  As mellah as men could be.
They had a pi-anna ag'inst the wall,
  The ladies had brought to town;
A wanderin' boozer whose name was Paul
  In front of the same set down.

His name it was Paul. That was all we knew,
  Exceptin' his brand of dope:
He guzzled enough for a lawggin' crew
  An' pulled at a paper rope.

THE MAN WHO COULD PLAY

Paul fondled his fingers along the keys
An' tested her with a chord;
Then lowered his head, an' he bent his knees
An' started to play—an', Lord!

The thunder it roared like a Summer storm,
Wind whistled among the boughs;
Then skies were blue an' the sun was warm—
In meddahs we heard the cows,
In meddahs we listened to tinklin' bells,
An' far an' away we heard
The drippin' of water in coolin' wells,
An' somewhere a trillin' bird.

As soft as the stir of an evenin' breeze,
As loud as the roar of falls,
He fingered all over the ivory keys,
That boy in the overhalls.
And, when he had stopped an' he raised his head
An' give to his hair a fling,
We clapped an' we clapped, but he only said,
"I used to could play the thing."

FUNGI

They sit on their silken cushions and say what a terrible
thing
To be the wife of a woodsman, the queen of a jungle
king—
To dwell in an humble dwelling, to live on a shanty
floor,
With nothing but house and husband, and a red rose
by the door.
But I, I am sick of longing, and I, I am dying here
For a strong man's home in a clearing and the love of
a pioneer.

They prattle of fads and fashions, of dinners and balls
and nights,
These powdered and pretty fungi, these gossiping para-
sites;
And men who are working wonders and men who are
doing deeds
Must dally and dance attendance, and humor their
dainty needs.
They talk of their virgin virtues, and sell them for
clothes and food—
While some brave heart wants a Woman to battle the
solitude.

For there are the woods to people, and there is the trail to make

I'm sick of their silly chatter, the cluck of the idle hen;
Is none of the work for women, and all of the work
for men?
They house, and they feed and clothe us, and we who
have love to sell
Are ready to be their women if only they pay us well.
But not for the highest bidder God ever has made the
bride:
He made us a helpmeet to him, to walk by the work-
er's side.

I long for the tangled forest, I long for the land that's
new!
For there is the work for women, for women and men
to do;
For there are the woods to people, and there is the
trail to make,
For the sake of the God who made us, for the sake of
a good man's sake;
For that is the work for doing, and that is the woman
of worth—
And I'd follow my man, if he asked me, to the utter-
most ends of the earth!

A DAY

This is the end of our day, my dear.
Nay, I know that the sun is glowing
High on the mountain above us here—
'Tis the smile of a friend in going.
Warmer now on your cheek he lingers,
Warmer now than in day's high noon,
Touching your eyes with his tender fingers,
Knowing the night shall come so soon.

This is the light of the hour of parting,
This is the holiest hour of all,
When the tears from the heart are starting
While the shades of the evening fall.
This is the hour when we closer cling
Than in our moment that was the maddest;
This is the fading of everything,
This is the happiest hour and saddest.

Nay, you smile and you look to meadows
Still a-swim in the shimmering sun;
See you not in the woods the shadows,
Telling us two that our day is done?

A DAY

There are shades in the merriest day,
In the woods there are shadows ever;
There is an ending to every way,
There is an hour for us all to sever.

Life is a parting and not a meeting,
A comradeship of a lonely mile,
Only an hour for a passing greeting,
Only a friendship for a while.
Surely the God that has brought us twain
Into the world to walk together
Somewhere shall give us two again
Another day in the Summer weather.

TO A CHIPMUNK

Now I've caught you; hush your squeakin';
  Now I've got you with the goods.
You're the fellah who's been sneakin'
  To my shanty from the woods.
You're the fellah who's been makin'
  Such a nuisance of himself;
You're the fellah who's been takin'
  Soda crackers from the shelf.

Thought I'd think a rat had done it,
  Thought you fooled me—an' you did.
When you heard me comin', run it
  For your burrow an' you hid.
But to-day I caught you squarely,
  Caught you with a cracker, too;
But to-day I caught you fairly.
  Now what shall I do with you?

Don't you know that diggin' under
  Some one's shanty any time,
Totin' off your little plunder,
  Mr. Chipmunk, is a crime?

TO A CHIPMUNK

Oh, you're sorry, an' you're squealin',
  Now I've got you dead-to-rights;
Don't you know it's wicked stealin'
  Crackers, even little bites?

Folks a-swipin' from a cabin
  For their crime had ought to pay,
Folks a neighbor's goods a-grabbin'
  Should be punished right away.
But it seems there now an' then are
  People like you that I know;
Maybe you're no worse than men are—
  So I guess I'll let you go.

INTERPRETERS

There are some thoughts too sad to put in words,
  There are some joys too deep for accents gay.
I think that that is why God makes the birds
  Such things to say.

There are some moments full of melodies
  Too sweet for harps or any human thing.
I think that that is why God makes the trees
  Such songs to sing.

There are some souls that down life's highway pass
  Too fair to last in hope's bright diadem.
I think that that is why God makes the grass
  To shelter them.

There are some hours too lonely for the light,
  When laughing sunrays but intruders seem.
I think that that is why God makes the night,
  To sleep, and dream.

HOLY GROUND

You have made holy ground of this wild land amid the
hemlock trees,
On ev'ry flower have left your kiss, have left your
voice on ev'ry breeze.
You came for but a little while; you went—forever it
may be;
But now the sunshine is your smile, the stars your ten-
derness to me.

You have made holy ground of all the paths we walked,
the ways we knew,
And pure as Heaven's jasper wall the hills that once
encompassed you.
You have shut sin from out this place, there is no evil
word nor thought—
By your divinity of face have here a holy wonder
wrought.

You have made holy ground of life wherever life the
way may lead,
Have taught me honor in the strife and decency in
ev'ry deed.

HOLY GROUND

Where'er I go, whate'er the goal, however far my feet
may stray,
I feel the presence of your soul and know a saint has
passed this way.

INTERCESSION

Come prop me on the pillow, nurse,
So I can see the sun;
Supposin' it should make me worse,
My time is nearly done,
An' one day more or one day less
It takes or gives to me
I'll never notice, nurse, I guess,
In all eternity.

A fellah never knows how well
He likes that world out there,
That world in spite of all its hell,
Its work an' pain an' care,
Until he lays here white an' weak
Like me upon a cot,
Just startin' out some world to seek
That he has most forgot.

How green the trees look! an' the grass—
Yet they are no more green
Than was the trees I used to pass,
I used to pass unseen.

INTERCESSION

How blue the sky looks! an' how deep,
  How far away it seems!—
It seems a sort of sea of sleep
  Beside a shore of dreams.

An' life seems such a little while
  When you go out to sea—
Why, I remember ev'ry smile
  That ever come to me!
You smoothed the pillow where I lay
  A little while ago,
An' it was just the other day
  My mother did it so.

My mother! Girl, I went away
  An' never said good-by.
I never watched her hair turn gray,
  I did not see her—die.
An' just to think, she laid like me,
  When all her work was done,
An' looked acrost that sleepy sea,
  A-wishin' for her son,

A-longin' for me—an' I know
  She's longin' for me still:
Beyond the sea where I must go
  She's standin' on a hill,

INTERCESSION

She's standin' as she used to stand,
  When down the path I'd roam,
To take her baby by the hand
  Again to lead him home.

An' God Himself, with all His laws,
  Won't stop me passin' through—
I know He'll let me in, because
  My mother ast Him to.
I wish I hadn't been so rough,
  With drink an' sin an' oath—
An' yet her soul is white enough,
  I know, to save us both.

A NIGHT LIKE THIS

A night like this, alone beside the fire,
  The world shut out, and by the world shut in,
The woods around as vibrant as a lyre,
  Where all sounds end, and where all sounds
    begin—
Ah, then the soul becomes a harp of gold
  That thrills with thoughts as tender as a kiss,
With visions, dreams, and memories of old,
  Alone beside the fire a night like this.

It is so still the very heart may hear
  Its own heart beat: a cricket in the grass,
The whisper of the nightwind very near,
  The bending of a bough to let it pass.
Then in the deep, mysterious, silent wood
  A sleeping bird stirs softly in its nest.
The pine-tree croons a song of motherhood,
  Each fragrant note a lullaby to rest.

Afar I hear the crystal waters strike
  The little stones, melodiously light.
There is, in all the world, no music like
  The sound of waters running in the night:

A NIGHT LIKE THIS

So clear, so cool, so musical, so sweet,
To weary hearts as welcome as the touch
Of velvet grasses to the weary feet,
To weary feet that labor overmuch.

Above is spread the canopy of stars,
Resplendent jewels on a robe of blue:
The pretty Pleiades, majestic Mars,
That bathe the earth with silver and with dew.
Peace, peace, is written on the azure dome,
And earth and heaven bridge the old abyss.
Alone beside the fire the heart goes home,
Alone beside the fire a night like this.

Upon the wall of green the shadows play,
As dies the fire or rouses into flame.
There lies to-morrow's road that leads away,
And here the tangled trail by which I came.
A spark flies upward, glowing in the air,
To follow it the vision upward turns;
Now it is there, and now it is not there;
But still unchanged old Mars above me burns.

O Memory, you are like my little fire,
My lonely fire beside the lonely trail:
Here are the ashes of the old desire,
The old desire enkindled but to fail.

A NIGHT LIKE THIS

Old thoughts leap up, as flames a moment glow,
The resurrection of a holy kiss;
Old joys, old pains, of other nights I know,
Alone beside the fire a night like this.

Yea, other nights—a night like this in June:
The same half-silence, same divine repose;
Upon the lawn a fountain's tinkling tune,
And, in the dark, the white face of a rose—
A face like hers, a face now white with fear;
Upon the rose a diamond of dew,
Upon her face the dewdrop of a tear;
And I was there, and that white rose was you.

That is the mightiest moment of a man,
The most remembered, holiest of all,
When doubt withdrew and perfect faith began—
When first for him he saw a teardrop fall.
He shall remember, all the weary miles,
No idle moment in the happy years
When once his laughter laughed her into smiles,
But some sad hour he talked her into tears.

Half guilt, half glory, will that moment be:
A shame that he had saddened one so fair;
Half guilt, half glory that for such as he
She bared her soul and wept, and did not care.

He would have suffered to have saved her sighs,
  Yet exquisitely sweet that hour apart;
For smiles come lightly to a woman's eyes,
  But sorrow wells from fountains of the heart.

You wore a scarf of silver, and I dreamed
  That it was moonlight fallen from the blue,
A mantle out of heaven that be-seemed
  An angel out of heaven such as you.
It lay across your shoulder. I have seen
  A square of moonlight lying on the grass,
And years rolled back that long had rolled between,
  And almost I have thought I saw you pass—

I saw you pass in your old beauty, as
  I saw you pass my campfire even now;
For this the magic that the moonlight has,
  The moonlight has a night like this, somehow.
And once the nightwind touched me on the cheek
  (That other night you touched it with a kiss)
And on the wind I heard your whisper speak—
  For such things happen on a night like this.

And I remember that you looked not down
  That night in June, but lifted up your face
Like that white rose imprisoned in the town
  That made, like you, the town a holy place—

A NIGHT LIKE THIS

That you looked up at me and at the stars,
  Not shy with shame but sad with questioning,
As though you looked beyond their very bars,
  In search of something there to which to cling.

I knew, you knew, that here had come the end.
  We heard the step of him of better right;
And I could stay and play the part of friend,
  Or I could take the trail I tread to-night.
I took the trail—there was no more to know;
  I took the trail—there was no more to do;
But you walk with me every trail I go,
  And every campfire is a dream of you.

And, if I doubt, yea, I who doubt no more,
  The stars make answer, answer "Do we change?"
The river follows its accustomed shore,
  Unaltered is the granite mountain range.
Have I not seen you pour upon the stone
  The sacrifice of sorrow, tenderly?
A night like this beside the fire alone
  If my heart ask, my own heart answers me.

A night like this alone beside the fire
  I look, like you, beyond the wall of trees.
I ask the stars, the stars that do not tire,
  For what they wait the weary centuries.

A NIGHT LIKE THIS

I ask the stars, that wait and alter not;
Perhaps they wait, as wait the souls of men,
Until some time, some time more long than thought,
When stars and men may claim their own again.

UNDERGROWTH

It ain't the trees that block the trail,
  It ain't the ash or pine;
For, if you fall or if you fail,
  It was some pesky vine
That tripped you up, that threw you down,
  That caught you unawares:
The big things you can walk aroun'—
  But watch the way for snares.

In life it ain't the biggest things
  That make the hardest load;
It ain't the burden big that brings
  Defeat upon the road.
Some fault you hardly knew you had
  May hurt more than you think—
Some little habit that is bad
  May put you on the blink.

THE MAN'S ROAD

Let us sit here on the porch, my son.
  Soon the night will come up the valley
Lighting her candles one by one,
  Hiding the mill and the lumber alley.
Soon the night will come slowly stealing
  Over the housetops and the street;
Soon the night will come gently healing
  All of the hurt of the Summer's heat.

You are weary, my boy, to-night,
  And I know it is not the working.
In your heart that was always light
  There is another sadness lurking.
Toil may weary the limbs that bear you,
  Toil may weary the arm that's strong;
But there are other wears that wear you—
  And I have watched you, son, and long.

Something you wished for, and you lost,
  Something, sonny, your life and glory;
Nothing now but the cruel cost—
  No, you never need tell the story.

But my hand, boy, is on your shoulder,
Not your father—your elder chum;
You are but younger, I but older—
And on the man's road both have come.

Son, you weep for your heart's desire;
Grief has folded her mantle o'er you.
Now where the son stands stood the sire
Maybe, my boy, long years before you.
For the lives that are all around us
Run like rivers, as still and deep.
Many see us, but none may sound us;
Each has his secret thought to keep.

Only the surface we behold—
If a shadow, a shadow fleeting.
Never the story may men unfold
Far too sacred to bear repeating.
Vexed perhaps at a little bother,
Glad perhaps at a little joy—
This the man that you thought your father:
Maybe you did not know him, boy.

Let us sit here on the porch, my son.
Soon the night will come up the valley
Lighting her candles one by one,
Hiding the mill and the lumber alley.

And my hand, boy, is on your shoulder,
  Not your father—your elder chum;
You are but younger, I but older—
  And on the man's road both have come.

CHRISTINA

Christina don't daintily dress,
  Christina don't giggle an' gush.
She ain't got a dollar, I guess;
  Christina slings hash for her cush.
  She sweats in the dinin'-room rush;
She scolds now an' then more or less;
She's boss of the boardin'-house mess
  An' rassles the coffee an' mush.

But where can you show me the dame
  That has such a hold on a chap?
There isn't a guy in the game
  But jumps when she gives him a slap.
  She's queen of the White River map;
She sets all the mill-crew aflame;
For her all the scrappers are tame;
  For her all the cowards'll scrap.

Christina has blue in her eyes,
  Christina has red in her hair;
It wouldn't cause any su'prise
  If maybe she happened to swear.

But noodle? Christina is there;
She's sized up the whole of the guys.
Christina is decent an' wise;
Christina has gingham to wear.

Christina, some female in town
Would pity your lot, if she knew.
She wouldn't think much of your gown,
Think less of the work that you do.
She'd smile at your gingham of blue;
She'd laugh at your calico brown.
But you can look up an' not down—
Christina, my hat's off to you!

THREE MORNINGS

You know the kind of morning that it was
(There are three mornings I remember well—
This was the first): The east a thing of gauze
Where one by one the filmy curtains fell,
So delicately fell, the morning light
Came now from nowhere, only grew and grew—
A little more of day and less of night
Until the west and east were equal blue.

That was the morning we came driving home
After the weekly dance at Coopersville,
When first the grayness stole across the dome;
Remember it was three we danced until?
We did not hurry; up the woodland road
I let the old horse amble as he would;
For driving lovers seldom use the goad,
And life that morning was so very good.

There may be mortals who have never seen
A morning in the wilderness arise,
Or learned the hundred shades there are of green,
The hundred tints of azure in the skies.

They may know Nature, but they do not know
  The inner secrets that she will disclose,
The thousand little beauties she will show,
  When turn the walls of black to walls of rose.

To hear the matin twitter of a bird
  Is sweeter music than his proudest lay;
Some mystery a distant branch has stirred,
  Some woodland signal of returning day.
And now another sings a sleepy note,
  Some little hidden singer answers him,
The low, hushed music of a waking throat,
  Soft as the singing in cathedrals dim.

And you were very weary, I recall,
  And I was very silent to your mood,
A little closer drew your little shawl,
  And thought the thought a waking pigeon cooed.
Then on my shoulder fell a golden head,
  That head you held so proudly other times;
The morning said the things I would have said,
  And said them better than a poet's rimes.

That was our mating, mating without speech—
  No pledge, no promise, no vehement vow;
The morning seemed into our hearts to reach;
  We always after understood, somehow.

THREE MORNINGS

There are three mornings I remember well,
  Three mornings that have been the best and
    worst,
When I have sipped of heaven, tasted hell—
  There were three mornings—this one was the
    first.

A year; another morning; by a fire
  I woke to feel a shiver in the breeze;
Above a pine sighed dismally, the sire
  Of all the circle of his somber trees.
An Indian runner loping down the hill,
  Red-visage, sullen, silent, swollen eyes,
Fit messenger to carry tale so ill—
  There was no blue that morning in the skies.

You had grown weary of your wedded life,
  The constant quarrel and the endless hurt,
The things I said that cut you like a knife,
  The husband's heel that ground you in the dirt.
I might return, but you were through with me,
  The two who had been one again were two.
I looked afar above the murmuring tree:
  But in the sky that morning was no blue.

Then from the west there came a puff of rain,
Not rain that comes majestic in its might:
The slow, damp fog that hides the hill and plain,
A wall of gray to bar the morning light.
The fire burned sickly, heavy hung the smoke;
No bird attempted song in hour so sad;
Beneath its weight of wet a sapling broke,
And east and west no hope of morning had.

Forgetting rain, the rain I could not feel,
I sat me down upon the sodden ground
And read your letter like a knife of steel;
I turned your knife of steel around, around.
The runner took his dollar with no sign
And left me to my thoughts and dying fire,
My dying fire and dying hopes of mine,
When all things died except the old desire.

It was not many mornings after that,
That other morning. All the hours of night
The waters rose upon the marshy flat,
The maddened river, like a horse in flight
Rolled down upon the village by the mill,
Rolled down upon the little sawmill town;
And some there were took refuge on the hill,
And some there were could only pray and drown.

And then I found you, when upon the east
One trembling finger wrote a word of dawn
And then a sentence, till the torrent ceased,
The gray sky opened and the night was gone.
And this made such a morning glorious,
The most remembered in my memory,
That, while I sought you madly, madly thus,
I came upon you seeking after me.

That morn we watched the troubled waters fall;
The crest was over and the danger past.
That was the morning holiest of all,
For we had learned the truth of it at last.
Each wrong, each right, each foolish in a way,
We wrote "forgotten" on our ills of old,
And saw the sunrays of returning day
Change skies to blue, and life again to gold.

Upon the hill we built our house again,
The sure, high hill that floods could never touch,
And loved a little better ever then,
Who loved too little when we loved too much.
Upon the solid rock of faith we stand,
And, gray the cloud or sunny blue the skies,
We meet them heart to heart and hand in hand—
For all our mornings three have made us wise.

THE WOODLAND

If you would love the woodland, it
  Must be a living thing to you—
A comrade at whose feet you sit
  And look together at the blue.
  You must love sun as flowers do
The god of day; the kiss of rain
  Must be as healing sweet to you
As to the daisy on the plain.

You must go faring without fear
  The woodland wild, however far—
In some new path a pioneer,
  And for your compass but a star.
  You must lie down with door ajar
Beside the midnight waters' hem,
  You must lie down where wild things are
And feel companionship with them.

You must delight in that delight
  The bud enjoys when first it knows
The passing of the Winter night
  And wakes to find itself a rose.

You must feel pleasures such as those,
The joy of living in the land,
And, as the waking leaves unclose,
Must feel your petaled soul expand.

IF FORTUNE CAME

If old Dame Fortune came to-day up in the timber on a hike
An' told me I could have my way, have any treasure that I like—
I wonder just what I would say, for just what blessin' I would strike.

Offhand I guess I'd ask for cash, for money is a handy thing.
I've had enough to make a splash or two myself in town in Spring;
I've drawed my stake an' made a flash an' had my little yearly fling.

Offhand I guess I'd ask for dough, for that's what most men think of first—
The thing that keeps us peggin' so, the thirst that's like a whisky thirst;
The thing that's helped a few I know, an' twice as many others cursed.

IF FORTUNE CAME

I'd ask a million bucks or two, so I could ditch the timber tall
An' know that it an' me was through, the corduroy an' four-turn haul—
That all that I would have to do was spend my money, that was all.

I'd buy myself a house in town with Brussels carpet on the floor;
I'd quit the booze an' settle down an' never hit it any more;
I'd put on style, an' do it brown—for that's, I guess, what money's for.

I'd set an' loaf the time away, I'd start again a-livin' white;
I'd can this dirty pipe of clay an' get a meersch'um that was right;
I'd eat my old three squares a day, an' sleep a good eight hours at night.

But some vacation, so to speak, I'd like to have it now an' then—
To leave my cash an' take a sneak up here along with other men
An', say, put in about a week in this old lumber camp again.

I'd like to just come walkin' in an' find you all a-settin' here

IF FORTUNE CAME

I'd like to just come walkin' in an' find you all a-set-
tin' here,
An' wash in that old pail of tin, an' drink a cup of
coffee clear,
An' then git out an' work like sin, just as I've done
for forty year.

I'd like to set beside the fire upon the norway deacon-
seat
An' listen to some sawed-off liar his yarns remarkable
repeat;
Or maybe go an' pull a briar, an' then come in an' eat
an' eat.

An' let me tell you, my good dame, I'd have you
clearly understand
If I can't mootch it just the same to road an' camp
an' timberland—
I wouldn't take it, if you came with twenty million in
your hand!

ONE

There runs a pathway by the hedge
  And up across the clearing,
A ribbon through the woodland's edge,
  Appearing, disappearing,
That fades beyond the hills of gray
  Where red the west is burning;
And many men have passed this way,
  And few who came returning.

Full many men have followed it,
  The path beside the shanty;
And some there were with wealth or wit,
  And some who sang a chanty;
And some were sad and some were gay,
  And there were some who flattered;
Yes, many men have passed this way—
  But only one who mattered.

A CAMP IN THE WOODS WITH A FRIEND

The wealth of a wonderful hall
With splendors of painting and gold,
The pride of a tapestried wall
Or portraiture faded and old,
The treasures of age and of art,
The luxuries riches can lend,
No comfort will bring to the heart
Like a camp in the woods with a friend.

The swallows are singing by day,
The roses are rioting near;
A bob-o-link over the way
Is adding his carol of cheer.
The road may be stony and hot,
But there is a trail at the end
That leads to life's pleasantest spot—
Just a camp in the woods with a friend.

And then come the eve and the stars,
And then come the dark and the moon;
You've lighted your glowing cigars,
You warble together a tune.

A CAMP IN THE WOODS WITH A FRIEND

The insects are flashing in flight,
  The branches so tenderly bend—
And you are at home for the night
  In a camp in the woods with a friend.

HIS EYES

Right where you sit she sat
That last, last night we knew—
With roses in her hat,
A dress of blue;
And, just like you,
She would not have a light
But just the fire,
And all outdoors was night,
And night a lyre
That played a hundred tunes,
Old Junes,
Old Junes and new.
It seemed that all the songs I ever heard
Were echoed in the song of just one bird
Who would not stop when westward
sank the sun,
Who would not stop until his song
was done,
His singing through.

But still the musk
Came to us through the dusk,
And low we talked about another day
When she would go away.

HIS EYES

"To-morrow, I suppose"—
And that was far.
"To-morrow"—no one knows
How near they are.

The camp
Was sleeping—hunyack, Injun, tramp
And all the crew.
And I sat here
And she sat there like you—
So near,
And yet so far she seemed to be,
For mountains lay between the maid
and me.

There was no light.
She seemed to fade into the night
As goes a friend,
Up hill, beyond the bend,
And out of sight.

Then we sat silent; silent so
She rose to go.
We said good-by,
And I,
I dared not sigh,
I dared not speak a word.

HIS EYES

The valley does not wed the sky,
The weed the bird.
Next day her father's car
Fell like a falling star
Beyond the hill
And left me standing still
With foolish notions thrilling through
my head—
Thank God, unsaid.

And, as the eve
Faded that night of nights—
A warning, I believe—
A little later came the accident
And dimmer lights
And woods that went
In deeper dark,
Until the spark
Fled from my eyes and left on earth
behind
Only her lovely image on my mind—
And I was blind.

I am the filer here, a handy man.
I can feel
As few men can
To sharpen steel.

HIS EYES

I file the saws
And play my little part,
Because
To file a saw or hang an ax is art.

I can not see,
But know the woods, the trees,
I can not see,
Yet hear their melodies.
And so
I can not see you, girl, and yet you seem
The living presence of a blind man's
dream.
I can not see—and yet you seem to bring
The pulse of old, the pain, and everything.
You touch me—kiss me—God, can it be true!
And you are you?

. . . . . .

I can not see,
Yet see, who could not see before;
And you shall be
My eyes forevermore.

THE ONE-SPOT

Rusty, an' greasy, an' not very beautiful—
  Holes in her fire-box, an' scale in her tubes—
Ready to rock in a manner undutiful,
  Rollin' the rookies an' scarin' the rubes;
Loose in her bearin's, an' loose in her habit, too,
  Shakin', an' quakin', an' rattlety-bang,
Needin' some paint an' some bolts, an' some babbitt,
      too—
  But she's the pride of the whole of the gang.

Rusty, an' greasy, an' dirty she maybe is,
  Wantin' some paint an' a week in the shops,
Cranky perhaps as a colicky baby is,
  Spittin' exhaust at the track-layin' wops—
But she can climb any grade that's in front of her,
  Hold on a hill any train that's behind:
Thirty-five loads is the regular stunt of her;
  Tack on a loader an' she'll never mind.

Railroadin' here ain't the transcontinental kind—
  Fifty-pound rail is the best that you get;
Bridges up here ain't the nice, ornamental kind—
  Just a few stringers a-crossin' the wet.

Humps in the track, that has many a crick to it,
  Rails that are spread, an' old ties that are knurled:
But, turn her loose with a load, an' she'll stick to it,
  Stick to the rottenest road in the world!

THE ASPEN

Where all the rivers northward run
  Beyond the Height of Land,
And where the law is just a gun,
  The judge a steady hand,
The feeble aspen of the drouth
  Becomes a giant thing,
The quivering aspen of the South
  Becomes an arctic king.

And so the man who journeys where
  The road to Hudson's lies,
His wine the sharp Canadian air,
  His compass in the skies,
Grows stronger like the aspen tree
  That in the North appears—
Takes on the stature presently
  Of arctic pioneers.

BEHIND A SPIRE

It ain't our wickedness alone
That keeps us out of church;
An' so, before you cast a stone
An' leave us in the lurch,
Just see if somethin' ain't about
Besides our mortal sin
That keeps us still a-holdin' out
When preachin' asts us in.

We used to have (I won't say where)
An elder in the place
Who led so loud in Sunday pray'r
It shook the throne of grace.
But all the week to feed his game
The busted swampers went;
He hailed the power of Jesus' name
An' soaked 'em twelve per cent.

Perhaps if eight had satisfied
That shoutin' hypocrite,
Some scoffin' swamper might have tried
To straighten up a bit;

But we dislike the man who tries
To give us title clear
To any mansion in the skies
An' grab our title here.

FORTY

Up the hill to Holton is a merry climb;
I have walked to Holton many is the time:
Dew upon the grasses, roses by the road,
Till you never notice if you have a load.

Down the hill from Holton is a merry way,
Coming home from Holton at the close of day:
Straight ahead the sunset, straight ahead the stars,
And the beacon burning at the open bars.

Up the hill to forty was a merry tramp:
Daisies on the hillside, lilies in the damp,
Friends to walk beside me all the busy years,
Sharing of my laughter, sharing of my tears.

Down the hill from forty, may it be the best!—
Walking to the refuge waiting in the west:
Straight ahead the sunset, straight ahead the stars,
And the beacon burning at the open bars.

THE MAN WHO ALWAYS WON

He
Was poor as me,
An' I was poor
As any beaver workin' in the wet,
Excursionin' ashore
His grub to get.
We dug like beavers, too,
As workers do.
But now I know
That all I worked for was a bed an' food,
But he had dreams
An', in the solitude,
He saw the gleams
Of golden dollars grow
To riches even in the long ago.
The thing success
That come to many in the wilderness
Was not the luck that envy says it was—
It had a cause.
We both were young,
We both were young an' strong.

I worked as hard,
I know I worked as long,
But dollars clung
To him. Long afterward
I knew the reason why:
He had a dream, an' not a dream had I.
First thing I knew
He was the boss. Yet, of the two,
I was the better cruiser. I could cruise
A tract of timber an' the sections choose
Where wealth was waitin' in the hills of pine;
So bossin' was his job, an' cruisin' mine.
I cruised for him an', when my cash was gone,
Was mighty grateful that he took me on.
An' then the woman come—they always come
In each man's life,
To some a wife
An' just a dream to some—
An' that was when
I started dreamin' dreams like other men.
She was no timid, blue-eyed, baby thing;
She was a queen, fit for a forest king,
She was a woman big of hip an' arm,
A farmer's daughter on a buckwheat farm.
On the trail
I used to wonder why some fellahs fail
An' others win;

An' I made up my mind
The reason I would find
An' buckle in.
But then again
There was the difference in different men:
He had the start
In dreamin' an' in doin'—an' a heart
Was like a stand of pine,
To take when I had found it. She was mine,
My sky, my sun,
An' yet he won.
I did not kill him, curse him, even hate—
For it was fate.
But sometimes when I leave the woods a spell,
An' it is seldom, an' the fellahs tell
How well he's done,
The man who always won,
Somehow all right it seems—
For he had dreams.
One time I even suppered at his place,
When in to talk about some timberland,
A house so grand
I wondered that I ever had the face
To think that she
Would take the likes of me.

Yet all the same,
There come a thought that took away the shame
That I had dared
To want her, raven-haired—
A thought that these,
The luxuries,
The gold, the glass, the auto, an' the fur,
The costly goods,
An' husband, too,
A cruiser in the woods
Had given her—
Although she never knew.

DISCOVERY

There lurks in every breast some of the fire
  That sent Columbus daring unknown seas,
There lurks in every human heart desire
  To find new continents. To such as these
The woodland is a world, and continents
  They who go seeking shall as surely find
As he who scorned an earth's experience
  And left established error far behind.

Let us go forth, as great Columbus sailed,
  And we shall find new archipelagoes—
Sequestered paths that only deer have trailed,
  Perhaps another continent, who knows?—
Some cloistered valley far from man removed,
  Some fragrant clearing hidden in the firs,
Some lily garden man has never loved,
  Waiting our coming, the discoverers.

We may not find Americas, but we
  Shall feel the thrill that thrilled a greater breast—
Perhaps a mountain that will glimpse the sea,
  Beneath a stump perhaps a partridge nest;

DISCOVERY

We shall make sail across the trackless green,
  We shall uncover riches in the flower,
We shall behold new beauties now unseen—
  Yea, we shall be Columbus for an hour.

THE TIMES

You hear a plenty of complaint
About the times. Folks say they ain't
As good as times had ought to be;
But *why* they ain't they can't agree.
Some blame the trusts, an' others blame
The agitation on the same
That keeps the public mind aflame.

An' there's the tariff; that is what
Some say it is, an' some it's not.
The customer will tell you why
The cost of livin' is so high—
The tariff, blame it! Bye-an'-bye
The factory whose trade is slow
Will tell you why the price is low—
The tariff, blame it! made it so.

Well, I dunno. It seems to me
That somethin' else the cause may be—
That there may be some reason plain
Why things cloud up an' look like rain.
I rather guess that maybe you
An' me have more or less to do

With makin' times. It ain't the chaps
In Washington alone, perhaps,
That make 'em good or make 'em dull
An' money scarce or plentiful.

Of course they help. When times is good
They're glad to have it understood
They fixed things like they said they would.
Perhaps they did, perhaps they do;
Perhaps they did the other, too—
For hard times never hit the purse
But some fool law can make 'em worse.

I rather guess that you an' me
Make panics an' prosperity.
An', if a quiet time should come
An' people have to figger some
To make the same old two ends meet
An' furnish stuff to wear an' eat,
That you an' me an' such as us
Made business so, an' matters thus,
An' not some legislatin' cuss.

Now confidentially, my friends,
Not what he makes but what he spends
It is that separates the ends
Man has such trouble makin' meet—
An' that's the kernel in the wheat.

THE TIMES

You know it sort of seems of late
That we are goin' quite a gait—
Are makin' cash hand over fist
With ev'ry business on the list.
An' actin' like (an' quite a bit)
A drunken sailor spendin' it.

I know, I know, when men git old
They like to set around an' scold
An' talk about the good old days
When people followed better ways.
An' so, whatever I may say,
You'll figger it's because the gray
Is creepin' slowly through my hair—
Because the snow is driftin' there.

But I remember, when a boy
We had a decent share of joy—
I'll bet I laffed as often then
As do these later gentlemen
Who hang around the blazin' bars
Or hit it up in auto cars.

We never seen a cabaret;
We never drunk a night away;
We never gambled till the sun—
An' yet, we had a *little* fun.

Why, boy, I look along the years
Of childhood with the pioneers,
An' memory is sweet with tears.

I see it now: the little town,
A road of plank that wandered down
A street we called "The Avenue,"
A sawdust city through an' through—
Oh, it would never do for *you!*

The girls wore gingham, calico,
An' other weaves you never know.
Their bonnets saved their cheeks from tan,
But raised the dickens with a man.
For blue eyes peepin' from a poke,
A white neck in a modest yoke,
Were twice as purty, seems to *me,*
As laigs that all the world can see.

At six the sawmill whistle blew;
With swingin' pails the sawmill crew
Come walkin' up the sawdust hill
From Ryerson's or Mason's mill
Or White an' Swan's or anywhere
A pathway met the thoroughfare.
Soft eyes of blue an' eyes of brown
Were watchin' in the windowed town

An' blushed, an' pulled the curtains down.
An' then the evenin' an' the moon!
Why, anywhere it's night an' June
An' moonlight is a place to spoon!

They hadn't made the auto then—
A lucky thing for common men
Like us, with just an envelope
Each thirty days, an' love, an' hope.
In fact a girl felt purty big
Whose fellah hired a liv'ry rig
An' drove her to a country dance—
That was enough extravagance.

But, lookin' backward to those nights,
They seem as full of love's delights
As life could be—perhaps because
Man's money don't make lovers' laws.
For I have set upon a stump
An' heard the heart inside me thump
As you who Peacock Alley sweep
Have never felt your pulses leap.
Or I have let the old horse walk
An' took her hand in mine to talk,
An' sneaked an arm around her waist
An' held her only half-embraced—

Yes, half in earnest, half in play,
For fear she'd take my arm away.
An' I have let the ribbons fall
An' never drove the horse at all
An' drawn her closer—Why, my boy,
Is money all there is of joy?
Is love across a glass of wine
A better, bigger love than mine,
In that old buggy 'neath the pine?

How I have wandered! My intent
To speak in this here argument
Concerned the times. When times is slow
It's me an' you that makes 'em so.
But people now have come to prize
The thing alone that money buys;
We all have learnt to advertise—
The more it costs the more we boast,
An' he is best who spends the most.
We slave to earn like maddened moles;
Within the earth we dig our holes
An' wallow there an' sell our souls.
We climb the air, we scrape the sky,
An' wind an' storm an' God defy.
The cottage that we used to own
We've traded for a thing of stone.

THE TIMES

We house our babes in caves of steel
An' never teach 'em there to kneel
An' love of home an' hearth to feel.

Why, home *meant* somethin' in the days
Us graybeards love to set an' praise.
You can't make homes of city flats
With hallway rows an' back yard spats,
Where men an' women, kids an' cats,
Are huddled on a single floor,
With ev'ry noise a call to war.
You've got to own the house, the ground,
An' everything that grows around.
A path that wanders to a gate,
Where little children come to wait
When father's comin' happens late,
That's home—Home ain't in dinin' out
An' eatin' ev'rywhere about;
Home ain't electric lights, the flash
Of di'monds, an' the music's crash—
For life is somethin' more than cash.

The times? Yes, I was talkin' of
The times. You sort of laff at love,
An' so we'll talk of dollars, friend—
A language you can comprehend.

THE TIMES

Well, times git tighter now an' then—
They may git tighter here again;
An' then we pay the price, my boy,
For all our artificial joy.
The joys of old made no one poor,
But made the country more secure.
This land was builded on a rock
Of corncob pipe an' gingham frock.
But now, when trouble comes, my lad,
When times git tight an' business bad,
We're little fixed in soul or purse
To meet conditions that are worse.
We've spent our money, spilled our blood,
An' built no ark to ride the flood
When trouble comes. An' then we quit
An' talk about the cause of it.
We blame some other fellah's game,
When we, ourselves, are all to blame.
The times? It's *us* that makes the same!

KEEP YOUR EARS AHEAD

On the tote-road, on the street, on the trail or tram,
I have known a hoss or two, teamster that I am:
Steppers with Kentucky blood, ordinary plugs,
Ev'ry kind of animile ever wearin' tugs;
Mustang pony, Percheron, goer, thoroughbred—
But the only hoss worth while kept his ears ahead.

When a plug becomes a plug ain't when he gits old;
For a plug may be a plug from the day he's foaled.
When a critter to the back slants them ears of his,
Then you know the bloomin' brute, know the brute he is.
For he'll either bite or balk, loaf, or bolt instead;
Never trust a hoss unless he keeps his ears ahead.

But a hoss that *is* a hoss, of the proper kind,
Doesn't listen all the while for the whip behind.
He is lookin' down the road, sniffin', an' all that—
He is takin' interest in the work he's at.
Work is joy to such a nag, farm or fancy bred;
Life is somethin' to a hoss that keeps his ears ahead.

KEEP YOUR EARS AHEAD

Man is somethin' like a hoss, with his work to do;
On the tough old trail of life how is it with you?
Do you put your shoulder then in the collar square?
Of the load we have to pull, do you pull a share?
Are you full of pep an' steam, or is your spirit dead?
Are you livin' in the past, or are your ears ahead?

THE WIDOWHOOD OF DOUBT

There is a widowhood of doubt, there is a deeper hurt
than death—
A life of always looking out, of listening with halted
breath:
A sudden likeness in the street, a sound familiar in the
tread
Of some one passing—so to meet some daily vision of
the dead.

The Missing, dead yet living, they who live no more,
and never died:
How these their widows day by day must bear a grief
unsatisfied!
Not theirs a great Physician's balm, not theirs to linger
by a cross,
Not theirs the years of sorrow's calm, the blessed certi-
tude of loss.

Still they must wonder if the wood or waters claimed
him, if the tree
It was that made their widowhood—or if unwidowed
they may be.

THE WIDOWHOOD OF DOUBT

So many go the woodland trail; the curtains close
about them; then
There comes a rumor or a tale; but they, they come
not forth again.

Then the long widowhood of doubt: Perhaps to-night
he will return;
From heart and window shining out the woman's
sainted candles burn—
Each day a disappointment, each new hour a hope, a
hope to dim,
A wish that constant ray would reach around the
world in search of him.

Ah, weedless widows, widowed, wed to years of such
uncertainty,
Wan widows of the living dead, earth's saddest mourn-
ers, such are ye.
If they be dead your candles seek, God give you proof
and comfort, too;
But, if they live and do not speak, God punish them
and pity you.

RETIRED

Yes, I've made a little stake
  In the lumber game;
Yes, I've been a lucky jake,
Managed in my life to make
  Somethin' from the same—
  Have a mill that's mine,
Have some money laid away,
Saved ag'inst a rainy day,
  Own a jag of pine;
Fuss around the puttin' green,
Travel in a limousine
  With a colored shofer,
Have a little cash to give,
Have a little time to live—
  Somethin' of a loafer.

Yep, I am the sort of gink
  People like to knock,
People who appear to think
That a fellah found his chink
  Layin' on a rock.

RETIRED

If I have a bit,
Not a dollar that I own
But I paid in flesh an' bone
For the whole of it.
An', I guess, a lot of men
People slander now an' then
Got it on the level,
Made the money they possess
Like the lumberman, I guess,
Workin' like the devil.

Life it wasn't always so—
Comfort an' content;
There was days not long ago,
There was days I didn't know
Where to raise a cent—
Figgered, borrowed, saved,
Looked for twenty years ahead,
Minded not what others said,
Studied, suffered, slaved;
Cruised the timber that was new
People said would never do,
Learnt alone to ramble;
Staked the little all I had,
Ventured when the times was bad,
Bought upon a gamble;

RETIRED

Walked the wilderness by day,
  Worried in the night;
With a timid bank to pay,
Learnt the one an' only way
  Was to work an' fight.
  Folks who think the pine
An' the money easy come,
I will gladly tell you some
  Ways I gethered mine:
Worked a peavey, pulled a saw,
Rode the river in a thaw
  When my legs was limber,
Beat the bullies with my fist—
Life an' home an' comfort missed
  For the sake of timber.

Then, at last, I got a mill,
  With a promise bought;
Lord, an' I remember still,
An' I guess I always will,
  Troubles that it brought:
  Somethin' breakin' loose,
Crackin' saws an' fallin' steam—
Ev'rything I had would seem
  Goin' to the deuce.
Then the price would fade away
An' the lumber piles would lay

Waitin' for a taker;
Stumpage droppin' off the earth—
All the timber wasn't worth
Fifty cents an acre.

Yet it helped to make a man,
All the trouble did;
For to work an' fret an' plan
Is the thing that makes the man
Out of any kid.
An' I'm glad the test
Come among the snows an' thaws
In the wilderness, because
It was for the best.
For I have a notion, too,
Woods of green an' skies of blue,
Snowin', blowin', rainin',
Can not help but make a man
Honest, decent, squarer than
All your city trainin'.

It's a business that is clean,
Workin' in the wood;
Skies of blue an' woods of green,
Winter storm or summer scene,
They are plain an' good.

Worked a peavey, pulled a saw, rode the river in a thaw

Timber on the hill
Has a flavor sweet as wine,
An' the sawdust of the pine
In around the mill
Makes a man as clean inside
As the sky that stretches wide
In the brightest weather.
God may walk the city streets
But, when man outdoors He meets,
Then they walk together.

There folks look you in the face;
There a man's a man;
There an ace must be an ace,
For the woods it ain't a place
For shenanigan.
There is less of law,
There is less of preachin' there,
But you find a fellah square
In a mackinaw.
Law or creed we mayn't know—
Though it's been a year or so
Since we seen a steeple,
When we buy or when we sell
Then we stack up purty well
With your city people.

So, if somethin' I have made
  For a rainy day,
If I've made a lucky trade,
By the rules of Hoyle I played
  All along the way.
  If I have a mill,
If I have a jag of pine,
Somethin' in the bank that's mine,
  Somethin' in the till,
If for me the axes swing,
If for me the pulleys sing
  An' the saw is hummin',
If I take a little rest
When my sun is in the west—
  Boys, I've got it comin'!

THE RECRUIT'S REQUEST

Sing us no song of the stripes an' the stars
  Callin' us heroes an' such;
We are plumb sick of the music of wars,
  Star spangled bannered too much.
    Give us a hail
    From the tote-road, the trail,
  Up where the water's alive;
Give us Paul Bunyan, or some such a tale—
  Sing us a song of the drive!

We aren't specially hymnin' our hate,
  We aren't damnin' the Hun.
Let us forgit it, a while any rate,
  Nix on the sword an' the gun.
    Give us a song
    As we're marchin' along,
  Somethin' to lighten the tramp;
Give us a tune on the old dinner-gong—
  Sing us a song of the camp!

When we go up to the guns of the foe,
  Where there is dyin' to do,
Some other song we will warble, I know,
  Never the red, white an' blue—

Chokin' a tear
For some girl who is dear
Over the hill an' the foam,
We will be lookin' right back over here.
Singin' some ditty of home.

THE WEDDING

I've heard of your wonderful weddin',
  My faraway, favorite niece;
I've read ev'ry newspaper headin'
  An' ev'ry "Society" piece.
I'm glad that your weddin' was quiet,
  An' simple in garb an' in gown,
An' no matrimonial riot
  Upsettin' the whole of the town.

So many there are that are noisy,
  With hunderds to cackle an' stare,
Reported from Boston to Boise,
  With lists of the notables there—
A church that is crowded with people,
  A street that is busy with din,
A fire-alarm rung from the steeple
  To gether the curious in.

But yours it was quiet an' simple,
  With only your friends an' your folks,
Who laffed at your daintiest dimple
  An' smiled at the minister's jokes.

Their greetin' was honest an' hearty,
The neighbors who come to the door,
A sort of a family party
Without any riot an' roar.

I always have thought gittin' married
Was rather a personal thing;
For why should a couple be harried—
Two turtle-doves just on the wing—
By crowdin' an' talkin' an' shoutin',
An' hunderds to gossip an' sneer?
A weddin's no picnic or outin',
As you will discover, my dear.

If I had the act to do over
(I speak as a fellah outdoors
Who likes to wade meadows of clover
An' camp by their musical shores),
I wouldn't have that for a minute,
When I an' the girl were made one;
I'd have just the song of a linnet,
I'd have just the light of the sun.

I wouldn't care much if the others
Should know I got married or not;
I'd just want the fathers an' mothers
When hitched double-harness I got.

THE WEDDING

I'd just want a preacher who's pleasant,
  I'd just want a day that is fair;
I wouldn't care much who was present
  As long as the lady was there.

The throwin' of rice I don't care for,
  I have some old shoes of my own;
I wonder what people are there for
  An' why all the truck should be thrown?
The rice an' the shoes an' the kisses
  May add to the holiday fuss,
But they wouldn't please me an' the missus
  By makin' a target of us.

An' no one would follow the custom
  Of kissin' the lady I chose;
If any one tried it, I'd bust him
  Right there on the spot on the nose.
If all of these holiday hooters
  Went kissin' the lady I win,
I'd unlimber a pair of six-shooters
  An' the party would really begin.

AFTERWARD

Well you remember where it was we met:
A cabin in a valley by a stream;
I can not think you could so soon forget—
That I alone remember and regret,
And dream.

I was a man of labor in the land
To which you came upon a holiday;
I was a man of labor, ax in hand,
And you a Summer pilgrim, laughing and
Away.

I loved the woodland ways no less than you,
Than you who spoke of them in rhapsodies—
Perhaps their greater beauties better knew
And deeper felt the music singing through
The trees.

I wonder if it always shall be so—
If you look laughing to that year again,
Recall a pleasant Summer with a glow,
While I remain, remember, only know
Its pain?

THE BAD MAN

There was a gink
Blew into camp
Not very long ago
Who'd make you think
He had a lamp
Like no one here below.
He bragged about
The fights he had,
He built up quite a rep;
Without a doubt
We thought him bad,
A party full of pep.

His laigs, his arms,
He said were swell,
His uppercut a peach;
His other charms
He used to tell—
His footwork an' his reach.
He bullied us,
I must confess;

We let him have his way;
An' not a cuss
But answered yes,
Whatever he would sav.

The matter might
Have gone along
The way that it had been,
But Monday night,
When feelin' strong,
He sort of sauntered in
An' made a crack
If any hick
Should give him any jaw
He'd beat him black,
For he could lick
The whole of Arkansaw.

I needn't state
The details now
Or which one was the one
That couldn't wait,
But, anyhow,
The jamboree begun.
The gang an' me
Commenced to maul

An' pound the geezer good.
He said that he
Could lick us all—
An', darn the luck, he could!

A LOOK BACK

You have packed up your duffle and put out your fire,
There is nothing ahead but the trail,
But the trail that leads up to the hill you desire—
You will come nevermore to the vale.
'Twas a shelter from storm and a home for the night,
'Twas a place for a fire and a snack;
You are through with it now, you are off with the light—
But you stop and you take a look back.

'Twas a spot for a camp such as seldom you find,
With a slope that would drain it of wet;
There was green grass in front, there was timber behind,
And the deadwood was easy to get.
'Twas a bed and a roof for the wandering one,
'Twas a rest and a refuge for Jack;
Now you're off to the east and you're up with the sun—
But you stop and you take a look back.

A LOOK BACK

And this life is just that from beginning to end:
It's a camp, and a hike, and a camp.
It is greeting a stranger, farewell to a friend,
Ev'ry morning new timber to tramp.
For we can not remain and we can not return,
We must follow old Time in his track;
But the campfires of old in our memory burn—
And we stop and we take a look back.

THE CRUISE

When all the years are but a year
  Fast drawing to a close,
And I am through with cruising here
  Forever, I suppose,
Then upward to the final cross
  The last hill I shall climb
And stand before the mighty Boss
  Who figures up our time.

He gave me once a world to cruise,
  He staked me to a life,
And left me my own way to choose,
  A path of peace or strife.
Across the sky He spread His stars,
  The sun to travel by,
His great unchanging calendars
  For pilgrims such as I.

But there are things He never knew
  In this great world of His:
The heavens are not always blue—
  The hurricane there is,

And nights without a star to shine
  There are, and sudden snares,
And tangled ways, and trailing vines,
  To take men unawares.

And, if He knew it all the while,
  That things like these are here,
The pitfall in the pleasant mile,
  The gray skies with the clear,
He knows that I for every rose
  Was punished with a thorn,
For every passion red He knows
  Some burden I have borne.

I did not make a woman's eyes,
  I did not make the brew,
I did not make the sweetest lies
  Man ever listened to,
I did not make the greed of gold,
  And all of human ills—
When I was young these things were old
  As His eternal hills.

I think He takes men in His hand,
  I and all mortal men,
I think that He can understand
  And balance things again,

THE CRUISE

I think He weighs a man beside
The sort of chance he had,
I think He knows His world is wide,
A good world and a bad.

I think He knows it all along
When figuring our time,
And scratches off the little wrong
The holy call a crime;
I think that when life's year is past,
However feet may fail,
That He will lead me home at last,
Although I missed the trail.

THE END

20 W

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper proc
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

PreservationTechnologi
A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVA
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

JAN 13 1989